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# TREATISE

ON THE

## PHILOSOPHY OF THE HUMAN MIND,

BEING THE LECTURES

OF THE LATE

**THOMAS BBROWN, M. D.**

PROFESSOR OF MORAL PHILOSOPHY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH.

---

**ABRIDGED,**

AND

DISTRIBUTED ACCORDING TO THE NATURAL DIVISIONS

OF

THE SUBJECT,

BY LEVI HEDGE, LL. D.

PROFESSOR OF LOGIC AND METAPHYSICS IN HARVARD UNIVERSITY.

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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CAMBRIDGE :

PUBLISHED BY HILLIARD AND BROWN.

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## PREFACE.

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THE lectures of Dr. Brown have been received with much favour by the community, and have found admirers in every class of readers. They contain many new and original views of the phenomena of thought, and an improved classification of the various states of mind. The author was a critical observer of the operations and emotions of the mind. He analysed many of its most complicated phenomena, and detected errors which had escaped the notice of other writers on the same subjects. His system of the philosophy of the mind has the merit of uncommon simplicity in its elementary principles, and of forcible and various illustration. The same remark may be extended to the statement of his views of Ethical Science, and of Natural Theology. In each of these departments of his work he has manifested an intimate acquaintance with the systems and theories of preceding writers, and an accurate discrimination in pointing out their faults.

It is much to be regretted, that Dr. Brown was not spared to prepare his lectures for publication. Excellent as they truly are in their present form, which is probably that precisely in which they were read to his pupils, their value might have been increased by a moderate portion of editorial labour judiciously employed in pruning and con-

tracting them in various parts. The work is incumbered throughout by superfluous matter, and the complaint of needless repetition and of irksome prolixity is scarcely less universal, than the admiration of the work on the whole. The author had matured his thoughts on the various subjects he was to discuss, and formed the general plan of his course with sufficient deliberation; but his lectures bear strong marks of having been prepared in haste and with very little revision. On no other supposition is it possible to account for the repetitions with which they abound. The same thing is said, with very little variation of terms, over and over again, not only in different lectures, but often in the course of the same lecture. Possibly this may not in all instances have proceeded from inadvertency. The author may have employed this expedient to impress on the minds of his young auditors such parts as were of superior importance, or less easy to be apprehended.

Each lecture is introduced by general remarks on the discussions which precede it. These are often drawn out to a considerable length, especially where the same subject is extended through several lectures, which is not unfrequently the case. Such recapitulations serve a beneficial purpose in oral discourses, by refreshing the memory of the hearers as to the order of the discussion, after an interval of rest or of other occupations. The lecturer must pause when his hour is gone, though his subject be unfinished. But the reader would pause only at the natural divisions of the subject, and retrospective summaries at any other places serve to perplex and embarrass, rather than to assist him.



Dr. Brown possessed a happy faculty of interspersing through his lectures choice extracts from the ancient classical authors, and also from modern poets and prose writers. These he introduced, not as subjects of criticism, nor as authorities to influence the judgment, but merely as striking coincidences of sentiment among writers on kindred subjects. Separately considered, they are interesting and instructive; but they occupy space unnecessarily, and often obscure the reasoning, by removing the connected parts to a greater distance from each other. Passages also of a light and humorous character, calculated to excite gay and playful emotions, he sometimes introduced. All these, with the endless repetitions before mentioned, swell out the work to twice its necessary size.

It is with the hope of extending the knowledge and usefulness of this valuable work, that it is now presented to the public in this contracted form. Persons who have heretofore been deterred from reading it by its great bulk, will be likely to gratify their curiosity when they perceive how much the necessary labour is diminished. Nothing essential to the peculiar excellence of the work has been omitted. Retrenchment has been confined to such parts as were deemed unnecessary. The author's system remains complete. No changes have been made in the arrangement of the parts; and no other alterations in the language, than such as were necessary for connexion, where portions had been removed.

In the narrow compass to which this work of Dr. Brown is here reduced, it may be conveniently employed as a text book in seminaries of education; and for this use it pos-

esses, on many accounts, pre-eminent claims. Besides the variety of important information which it contains, its clear and forcible reasoning, richness of illustration, singular felicity of style, and the deep reverence every where manifested in it for subjects connected with moral and religious duties, combine to recommend it as peculiarly suitable for persons who are forming their intellectual and moral habits.

Dr. Brown, a short time before his death, published a brief Abstract of the first part of his work, comprising somewhat less than half his course of lectures. This abstract has been consulted in making the divisions, so far as it extends, and the Introduction to it is here inserted entire.

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# PHILOSOPHY

OF

## THE HUMAN MIND.

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### INTRODUCTION.

THE Philosophy of the Human Mind, in its fullest extent, may be regarded as comprehensive of many sciences.

I. *That which perceives* is a part of nature as truly as *the objects of perception* which act on it, and, as a part of nature, is itself an object of investigation purely *physical*. It is known to us only in the successive changes which constitute the variety of our feelings; but the regular sequence of these changes admits of being traced, like the regularity which we are capable of discovering in the successive organic changes of our bodily frame. There is a **PHYSIOLOGY OF THE MIND**, then, as there is a *physiology of the body*,—a science, which examines the phenomena of our spiritual part simply as phenomena, and, from the order of their succession, or other circumstances of analogy, arranges them in classes under certain general names; as, in the physiology of our corporeal part, we consider the phenomena of a different kind which the body exhibits, and reduce all the diversities of these under the names of a few general Functions.

II. If these arrangements could be conceived to be so fully and accurately made, that not a single phenomenon of the mind or of the living body had been unobserved, nor an injudicious systematic place been in any one instance assigned, from a preference of a less to a more important relation of the kindred phenomena, the Physiology of the Mind and of the Body would be alike complete. But some of the mental phenomena are of such a nature, as of themselves to give rise to a distinct science. After inquiring what has generally been the conduct of mankind, and therefore what may generally be again expected in

certain circumstances, we have still to inquire, in relation to that conduct, what *should have been*, and what *should be*, in those circumstances, as morally fit to be done ; and though this ETHICAL SCIENCE, if very minutely traced to its source, may be found to be only a mode of stating the physical order of succession of certain feelings that arise on the contemplation of certain actions, it still relates to feelings of so peculiar a kind and of such comprehensive influence on the whole of human life, as justly to deserve a separate consideration.

The science of ETHICS is itself twofold ; as it is purely *speculative*, and as it is *practical* ;—in the one case, inquiring into the feelings to which we owe our general notions of moral propriety or impropriety of conduct ; in the other case, applying this knowledge to the various circumstances in which man can be placed, and stating, with relation to these circumstances, what it would be right or wrong for him, in the particular situation supposed, to do or to omit.

III. It is not to the individual agent alone, that such views of conduct, in the greater number of instances, relate. The happiness of others, as far as it is in any degree within our power to promote it, is a primary object of moral regard, which it is guilt to violate or neglect. But the duty of consulting for the good of others, obvious as its directions may be in the ordinary cases of domestic life, is in many cases, particularly in those which relate to remote and extensive interests, of very difficult application. The happiness of our country, or of the still greater community of mankind, is not reducible with the same ease to its simple elements, as the happiness of the individuals that are dwelling around us, whose very wants almost point out, of themselves, the means by which they may be remedied. It is not enough, therefore, to be a patriot or a general philanthropist in design ;—before we can expect truly to benefit the world, we must know in what way it is possible to benefit it ; for, without this knowledge, which comprehends the distant as well as the near, we may, in lessening the misery of days or months, produce or prolong the misery of ages. A sedulous study of the means by which public happiness may be most effectually increased and preserved, is hence a part, and a most important part, of public virtue ; and the science of POLITICS, in all its extensive bearings on the wealth, the virtue, the liberty, and the security of nations, may be said, accordingly, to be comprehended in that general science of moral duty, which it is the object of *Practical Ethics* to develope and apply.

IV. It is not with mankind only, however, and with the other creatures that may be benefited by our kindness, or may suffer from our

cruelty, that we are morally connected. The most important of all our relations is that which connects us with the Great Being who formed us, and under whose continued government we live. If it be our duty to look with gratitude to our earthly benefactors, and to love to contemplate their goodness, the same sentiment must lead us, with still more powerful obligation, to contemplate with grateful love that Highest Beneficence to which we owe whatever we possess. In this sense, the investigations of NATURAL THEOLOGY may be said almost to be included in *Practical Ethics*. Our moral sentiment alone, though there were no other reason to influence us, should prompt us to a devout study of the nature of the Supreme Being, in all his manifestations of it to the creatures whom he has deigned to render capable of adoring him ; and while, with the deep conviction of our dependence on his power, we endeavour humbly to trace his character as the Creator and Governor of the Universe, we are led by that very character which we trace to a more confident expectation,—the grounds of which, even exclusively of the light of Revelation, it must be one of the most interesting of inquiries to examine,—that our spiritual existence is not to cease in the mere decay of the bodily elements which surround us, but that He who has been our God in our brief earthly life, will be our God also in the endless ages of a life that is immortal.

Such are the various lights in which the human mind may be regarded,—*physiologically, ethically, politically, theologically*. It is thus the object of many sciences,—but of sciences that, even when they seem most remote, have still one tie of intimate connexion, in the common relation, which they all directly bear to the series of feelings of the inquirer himself.



# BOOK I.

## PHYSIOLOGY OF THE MIND.

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### PART I.

OF THE PHENOMENA IN GENERAL ;

WITH

PRELIMINARY ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE ADVANTAGES OF THE STUDY OF THE  
MIND, AND OF THE PRINCIPLES OF PHILOSOPHIZING IN THEIR APPLICATION TO IT.

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### CHAPTER I.

RELATION OF THE PHILOSOPHY OF MIND TO THE OTHER SCIENCES,

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#### SECTION I.—*Relation of the Philosophy of Mind to the Sciences in General.*

ONE very obvious distinction of the physical investigations of mind and matter, is, that, in intellectual science the *materials* on which we operate, the *instruments* with which we operate, and the *operating agent*, are the same. It is the mind, endowed with the faculties of perception and judgment, observing, comparing, and classifying the phenomena of the mind. In the physics of matter, it is, indeed, the mind which observes, compares, and arranges ; but the phenomena are those of a world, which, though connected with the mind by many wonderful relations of reciprocal agency, still exists independently of it,—a world that presents its phenomena only in circumstances, over most of which we have no control, and over others a control that is partial and limited. The comparative facility, as to all external circumstances, attending the study of the mental phenomena, is unquestionably an advantage of no small moment. In every situation in which man can be placed, as long as his intellectual faculties are unimpaired, it is impossible that he should be deprived of opportunities of carrying on this intellectual study ; because, in every situation in which he can be placed, he must still have with him that universe of thought, which is the true home and empire of the mind. No costly apparatus is requisite,—no

tedions waiting for seasons of observation. He has but to look within himself to find the elements which he has to put together, or the compounds which he has to analyze, and the instruments that are to perform the analysis or composition.

A right view of the science of mind is essential to every other science ; and it would be vain to expect, that any branch of the physics of mere matter could be cultivated to its highest degree of accuracy and perfection, without a due acquaintance with the nature of that intellectual medium, through which alone the phenomena of matter become visible to us, and of those intellectual instruments, by which the objects of every science, and of every science alike, are measured, and divided, and arranged. Whether we regard the mind as the instrument or the artist, it is equally that by which all the wonders of speculative, or practical knowledge, are evolved. It is an agent operating in the production of new results, and employing for this purpose the known laws of thought, in the same manner as, on other occasions, it employs the known laws of matter. The objects, to which it may apply itself, are indeed various, and as such, give to the sciences their different names. But, though the objects vary, the observer and the instrument are continually the same. The limits of the powers of this mental instrument are not the limits of its powers alone ; they are also the only real limits, within which every science is comprehended.

To the philosophy of mind, then, every speculation, in every science, may be said to have relation as to a common centre. The knowledge of the quality of matter, in the whole wide range of physics, is not itself a phenomenon of matter, more than the knowledge of any of our intellectual or moral affections ; it is truly, in all its stages of conjecture, comparison, doubt, belief, a phenomenon of mind ; or, in other words, it is only the mind itself existing in a certain state. The inanimate bodies around us might, indeed, exhibit the same changes as at present, though no mind had been created. But science is not the existence of these inanimate bodies ; it is the principle of thought itself variously modified by them, which, as it exists in certain states, constitutes that knowledge which we term *Astronomy* ; in certain other states, that knowledge which we term *Chemistry* ; in other states our *Physiology*, corporeal or mental, and all the other divisions and subdivisions of science. It would surely be absurd to suppose, that the mixture of acids and alkalies constitutes *Chemistry*, or that *Astronomy* is formed by the revolution of planets round a sun. Such phenomena, the mere objects of science, are only the occasions on which *Astronomy* and



Chemistry arise in the mind of the inquirer, Man. It is the mind which perceives bodies, which reasons on their apparent relations, which joins them in thought as similar, however distant they may be in sphere, or separates them in thought as dissimilar, though apparently contiguous. These perceptions, reasonings, and classifications of the mind must, of course, be regulated by the laws of mind, which mingle in their joint result with the laws of matter. It is the object indeed which affects the mind when sentient ; but it is the original susceptibility of the mind itself, which determines and modifies the particular affection, very nearly, as the impression which a seal leaves on melted wax depends, not on the qualities of the wax alone, or of the seal alone, but on the softness of the one, and the form of the other. Change the external object which affects the mind in any case, and we all know, that the affection of the mind will be different. It would not be less so, if, without any change of object, there could be a change in the mere feeling, whatever it might be, which would result from that different susceptibility becoming instantly as different, as if not the mind had been altered, but the object which it perceived. There is no physical science, therefore, in which the laws of mind are not to be considered together with the laws of matter ; and a change in either set of laws would equally produce a change in the nature of the science itself.

So accustomed are we, however, to consider the nature and limits of the different sciences, as depending on the objects themselves, and not on the laws of the mind, which classes their relations, that it may be difficult at first to admit the influence of these mere laws of mind, as modifying general physics, at least to the extent now stated. But, that a change in the laws of human thought, whatever influence it might have in altering the very nature and limits of the physical sciences, would at least affect greatly the state of their progress, must be immediately evident to those who consider for a moment on what discovery depends ; the progress of science being obviously nothing more than a series of individual discoveries, and the number of discoveries varying with the powers of the individual intellect. The same phenomena which were present to the mind of Newton, had been present, innumerable times before, not to the understandings of philosophers only, but to the very senses of the vulgar. Every thing was the same to him and to them, except the observing and reasoning mind. To him alone, however, they suggested those striking analogies, by which, on a comparison of all the known circumstances in both, he ventured to class the force which retains the planets in their orbits, with that which occasions the fall of a pebble to the earth.

The laws of the observing and comparing mind, then, it must be admitted, have modified, and must always continue to modify, every science, as truly as the laws of that particular department of nature, of which the phenomena are observed and compared. But, it may be said, we are Chemists, we are Astronomers, without studying the philosophy of mind. And true it certainly is, that there are excellent Astronomers, and excellent Chemists, who have never paid any particular attention to intellectual philosophy. The general principles of philosophizing, which a more accurate intellectual philosophy had introduced, have become familiar to them, without study. But those general principles are not less the effect of that improved philosophy of mind, any more than astronomy and chemistry themselves have now a less title to be considered as sciences,—because, from the general diffusion of knowledge in society, those who have never professedly studied either science, are acquainted with many of their most striking truths. It is gradually, and almost insensibly, that truths diffuse themselves,—at first admired and adopted by a few, who are able to compare the present with the past, and who gladly own them, as additions to former knowledge,—from them communicated to a wider circle, who receive them, without discussion, as if familiar and long known; and at length, in this widening progress, becoming so nearly universal, as almost to seem effects of a natural instinctive law of human thought;—like the light, which we readily ascribe to the sun, as it first flows directly from him, and forces his image on our sight; but which, when reflected from object to object, soon ceases to remind us of its origin, and seems almost to be a part of the very atmosphere which we breathe.

I am aware, that it is not to improvements in the mere philosophy of mind, that the great reformation in our principles of physical inquiry is commonly ascribed. Yet it is to this source—certainly at least to this source chiefly, that I would refer the origin of those better plans of philosophical investigation which have distinguished with so many glorious discoveries the age in which we live, and the ages immediately preceding. When we think of the great genius of Lord Bacon, and of the influence of his admirable works, we are too apt to forget the sort of difficulties which his genius must have had to overcome, and to look back to his rules of philosophizing, as a sort of ultimate truths, discoverable by the mere perspicacity of his superior mind, without referring them to those simple views of nature in relation to our faculties of discovery, from which they were derived. The rules which he gives us, are rules of physical investigation; and it is very natural for us, therefore, in es-

timating their value, to think of the erroneous physical opinions which preceded them, without paying sufficient attention to the false theories of intellect, which had led to those very physical absurdities. Lord Bacon, if he was not the first who discovered that we were in some degree idolaters, to use his own metaphor, in our intellectual worship, was certainly the first who discovered the extent of our idolatry. But we must not forget, that the temple which he purified, was not the temple of external nature, but the temple of the mind,—that in its inmost sanctuaries were all the idols which he overthrew,—and that it was not till these were removed, and the intellect prepared for the presence of a nobler divinity, that Truth would deign to unveil herself to adoration ;—as in the mysteries of those Eastern religions, in which the first ceremony for admission to the worship of the god is the purification of the worshipper.

In the course of our analysis of the intellectual phenomena, we shall have frequent opportunities of remarking the influence, which errors with respect to these mere phenomena of mind must have had on the contemporary systems of general physics, and on the spirit of the prevailing plans of inquiry. It may be enough to remark at present the influence of one fundamental error, which, as long as it retained its hold of the understanding, must have rendered all its energies ineffectual, by wasting them in the search of objects, which it never could attain, because in truth they had no real existence,—to the neglect of objects that would have produced the very advantage which was sought. I allude to the belief of the schools, in the separate existence, or entity as they technically termed it, of the various orders of universals, and the mode in which they conceived every acquisition of knowledge in reasoning to take place, by the intervention of certain *intelligible forms* or *species*, existing separately in the intellect, as the direct objects of thought ;—in the same manner as they ascribed simple perception to the action of species of another order, which they termed *sensible species*,—the images of things derived, indeed, from objects without, but when thus derived, existing independently of them. When we amuse ourselves with inquiring into the history of human folly—that most comprehensive of all histories—which includes, at least for many ages, the whole history of philosophy ; or rather, to use a word more appropriate than amusement, when we read with regret the melancholy annals of genius aspiring to be pre-eminently frivolous, and industry labouring to be ignorant, we often discover absurdities of the grossest kind, which almost cease to be absurdities, on account of

other absurdities, probably as gross, which accompany them ; and this is truly the case, in the grave extravagance of the logic of the schools. The scholastic mode of philosophizing, ridiculous as it now seems, was far from absurd, when taken in connexion with the scholastic philosophy. It was indeed the only mode of procedure, which that philosophy could consistently admit. To those who believed that singular objects could afford no real knowledge, *singularium nullam dari scientiam* ; and that this was to be obtained only from what they termed *intelligible species*, existing not in external things, but in the intellect itself, it must have seemed as absurd to wander, in quest of knowledge, out of that region in which alone they supposed it to exist, and to seek it among things singular, as it would now, to us, seem hopeless and absurd, to found a system of physical truths on the contemplation and comparison of universals. While this false theory of the mental phenomena prevailed, was it possible, that the phenomena of matter should have been studied on sounder principles of investigation, when any better plan must have been absolutely inconsistent, with the very theory of thought ? It was in mind that the student of general nature was to seek his guiding light, without which all then was darkness. The intellectual philosopher, if any such had then arisen to analyze simply the phenomena of thought, without any reference to general physics, would in truth have done more in that dark age, for the benefit of every physical science, than if he had discovered a thousand properties of as many different substances.

Let us suppose, for a moment, that an accurate view of the intellectual process of abstraction could have been communicated to a veteran sage of the schools, at the very moment when he was intently contemplating the tree of Porphyry, in all its branches of species and genera, between the individual and the *sumum genus* ; and when he was preparing perhaps, by this contemplation of a few universals, to unfold all the philosophy of colours, or of the planetary movements, would the benefit which he received from this clearer view of a single process of thought have terminated in the mere science of mind—or would not rather his new views of mind have extended with a most important influence to his whole wide views of matter ? He must immediately have learned, that, in the whole tree of genera and species, the individual at the bottom of his scale was the only real independent existence, and that all the rest, the result of certain comparisons of agreement, were simple modifications of his own mind, not produced by any thing existing in his intellect, but by the very constitution of his intellect

itself; the consideration of a number of individuals as of one species being nothing more than the feeling of their agreement in certain respects, and the feeling of this agreement being as simple a result of the observation of them together, as the perception of each, individually, was of its individual presence. It would surely have been impossible for him, with this new and important light, to return to his transcendental inquiries, into entities, and quiddities, and substantial forms; and the simple discovery of a better theory of abstraction, as a process of the mind, would thus have supplied the place of many rules of philosophizing.

The philosophy of mind then, we must admit, did, in former ages at least, exercise an important influence on general science;—and are we to suppose that it has now no influence?

Even though no other advantage were to be obtained from our present juster views of mind, than the protection which they give from those gross errors of inquiry to which the philosophers of so long a series of ages were exposed, this alone would surely be no slight gain. But, great as this advantage is, are we certain, that it is all which the nicest mental analysis can afford,—or rather, is it not possible at least, that we may still, in our plans of physical investigation, be suffering under the influence of errors, from which we should be saved by still juster views of the faculties employed in every physical inquiry?

That we are not aware of any such influence, argues nothing; for to suppose us aware of it, would be to suppose us acquainted with the very errors which mislead us. Aquinas and Scotus, it is to be presumed, and all their contentious followers, conceived themselves as truly in the right path of physical investigation, as we do at this moment; and, though we are free from their gross mistakes, there may yet be others of which we are less likely to divest ourselves, from not having as yet the slightest suspicion of their existence. The question is not, Whether our method of inquiry be juster than theirs,—for, of our superiority in this respect, if any evidence of fact were necessary, the noble discoveries of these later years are too magnificent a proof to allow us to have any doubt,—but, Whether our plan of inquiry may not still be susceptible of improvements, of which we have now as little foresight, as the Scotists and Aquinists of the advantages which philosophy has received from the general prosecution of the inductive method. There is, indeed, no reason now to fear, that the observation of particular objects, with a view to general science, will be despised as incapable of giving any direct knowledge, and all real science be confined to univer-

sals. But though a sounder view of one intellectual process may have banished from philosophy much idle contention, and directed inquiry to fitter objects, it surely does not therefore follow, that subsequent improvements in the philosophy of mind are to be absolutely unavailing. On the contrary, the presumption unquestionably is, that if by understanding better the simple process of abstraction, we have freed ourselves from many errors in our plans of inquiry, a still clearer view of the nature and limits of all the intellectual processes concerned in the discovery of truth, may lead to still juster views of philosophizing.

The consideration of mind, as universally present and presiding,—at once the medium of all the knowledge which can be acquired, and the subject of all the truths of which that knowledge consists,—gives, by its own unity, a sort of unity and additional dignity to the sciences, of which their scattered experiments and observations would otherwise be unsusceptible. It is an unfortunate effect of physical inquiry, when exclusively devoted to the properties of external things, to render the mind, in our imagination, subordinate to the objects on which it is directed; the faculties are nothing, the objects every thing. The very nature of such inquiry leads us perpetually without to observe and arrange, and nothing brings us back to the observer and arranger within; or, if we do occasionally cast an inquisitive glance on the phenomena of our thought, we bring back with us what Bacon, in his strong language, calls “the smoke and tarnish of the furnace;”—the mind seems to us, to be broken down to the littleness of the objects which it has been habitually contemplating; and we regard the faculties that measure earth and heaven, and that add infinity to infinity, with a curiosity of no greater interest, than that with which we inquire into the angles of a crystal, or the fructification of a moss. To the inquirer, however, whose mind has been previously imbued with this first philosophy, and who has learned to trace, in the wonders of every science, the wonders of his own intellectual frame, there is no physical research, however minute its object, which does not at once elevate the mind, and derive elevation from it. Nothing is truly humble, which can exercise faculties that are themselves sublime.

SECTION II.—*Relation of the Philosophy of Mind to the Sciences and Arts more strictly Intellectual.*

The study of the natural limits of the faculties of the mind, has, sometimes, been misrepresented, as favouring a tendency to vague and unlimited doubt on all subjects, even on those most important to individual and social happiness. But far from leading to general scepticism, it is, on the contrary, a sound study of the principles of our intellectual and moral nature, which alone can free from the danger of it. If the sceptical philosophy be false, as the assertors of this objection will allow that it most assuredly is, it can be overcome and destroyed only by a philosophy that is true; and the more deeply, and the more early, the mind is imbued with the principles of truth, the more confidently may we rely on its rejection of the errors that are opposed to them. It is impossible for one, who is not absolutely born to labour, to pass through life without forming, in his own mind, occasionally, some imperfect reflections on the faculties by which he perceives and reasons; or without catching, from those with whom he may associate, some of those vague notions, of a vague philosophy, which pass unexamined from mind to mind, and become current in the very colloquial language of the day. The alternatives, therefore, (if we can, indeed, think of any other alternative when truth is one) are not those of knowledge and absolute ignorance of the mental phenomena, but of knowledge more or less accurate; because absolute ignorance, even though it were a state to be wished, is beyond our power to preserve, in one who enjoys, in any respects, the benefit of education and liberal society. We might, with much greater prospect of success, attempt, by merely keeping from his view all professed treatises on Astronomy, to prevent him from acquiring that slight and common acquaintance with the system of the heavenly bodies, which is necessary for knowing that the sun does not go round the earth, than we could hope to prevent him from forming, or receiving, some notions accurate or inaccurate, as to the nature of mind; and we surely cannot suppose, that the juster those opinions are, as to the nature and force of the principles of belief, the feebler must the principles of belief appear. It is not so, that nature has abandoned us, with principles which we must fear to examine, and with truths and illusions which we must never dare to separate. In teaching us what our powers are incapable of attaining, she has, at the same time, taught us what truths they may attain; and within this boundary, we have the satisfaction of knowing, that she has



placed all the truths that are important for our virtue and happiness. He, whose eyes are the clearest to distinguish the bounding circle, cannot, surely, be the dullest to perceive the truths that are within. To know only to doubt, is but the first step in philosophy ; and to rest at this first step, is either imbecility or idleness. It is not there that Wisdom sees, and compares, and pronounces ; it is Ignorance, that, with dazzled eyes, just opening from the darkness of the night, perceives that she has been dreaming, without being able to distinguish, in the sunshine, what objects really existing are around. He alone is the philosopher truly awake, who knows both how to doubt, and how to believe ; believing what is evident on the very same principles, which lead him to doubt, with various degrees of uncertainty, where the evidence is less sure. To conceive that inquiry must lead to scepticism is itself a species of scepticism, as to the power and evidence of the principles to which we have given our assent, more degrading, because still more irrational, than that open and consistent scepticism which it dreads. It would, indeed, be an unworthy homage to truths which we profess to venerate, to suppose, that adoration can be paid to them only while we are ignorant of their nature ; and that to approach their altars would be to discover, that the majestic forms, which seem animated at a distance, are only lifeless idols, as insensible as the incense which we have offered to them.

The study of the powers and limits of the understanding, and of the sources of evidence in external nature and ourselves, instead of either forming or favouring a tendency to scepticism, is then, it appears, the surest, or rather the only mode, of removing the danger of such a tendency. That mind may soon doubt even of the most important truths, which has never learned to distinguish the doubtful from the true. But to know well the irresistible evidence on which truth is founded, is to believe in it, and to believe in it forever.

Nor is it from the danger of scepticism only, that a just view of the principles of his intellectual constitution tends to preserve the philosophic inquirer. It saves him, also, from that presumptuous and haughty dogmatism, which though free from doubt, is not, therefore, necessarily free from error ; and which is, indeed, much more likely to be fixed in error than in truth, where the inquiry, that precedes conviction, has been casual and incomplete. A just view of our nature as intelligent beings, at the same time that it teaches us enough of our strength to allow us to rest with confidence on the great principles, physical, moral, and religious, in which alone it is of importance for us to confide,

teaches us also enough of our weakness, to render us indulgent to the weakness of others. We cease to be astonished that multitudes should differ from us ; because we know well, that while nature has made a provision for the universal assent of mankind to those fundamental physical truths, which are essential to their very existence, and those fundamental truths of another kind, which are equally essential to their existence as subjects of moral government, she has left them, together with principles of improvement that ensure their intellectual progress, a susceptibility of error, without which there could be no progression ; and while we almost trace back the circumstances which have modified our own individual belief, we cannot but be aware, at the same time, how many sources there are of prejudice, and, consequently, of difference of opinion, in the various situations in which the multitudes, that differ from us, have been placed.

How much of the fury of the persecuting spirit of darker ages would have been softened and turned into moderation, by juster views of the nature of man, and of all the circumstances on which belief depends ! It appears to us so very easy to believe what we consider as true,—or, rather, it appears to us so impossible to disbelieve it,—that, if we judge from our own momentary feelings only, without any knowledge of the general nature of belief, and of all the principles in our mental constitution by which it is diversified, we very naturally look on the dissent of others as a sort of wilful and obstinate contrariety, and almost as an insulting denial of a right of approbation, which we consider ourselves, in these circumstances, as very justly entitled to claim. The transition from this supposed culpability to the associated ideas of pains and penalties, is a very natural one ; and there is therefore a sufficient fund of persecution in mere ignorance, though the spirit of it were not, as it usually is, aggravated by degrading notions of the divine Being, and false impressions of religious duty. Very different are the sentiments which the science of mind produces and cherishes. It makes us tolerant, not merely by showing the absurdity of endeavouring to overcome, by punishment, a belief which does not depend on suffering ; but which may remain, and even gather additional strength, in imprisonment, in exile, under the axe, and at the stake. The absurdity of every attempt of this kind it shows indeed ; but it makes us feel, still more intimately, that *injustice* of it, which is worse than absurdity,—by showing our common nature, in all the principles of truth and error, with those whom we would oppress ; all having faculties that may lead to truth, and tendencies of various kinds which may mislead to error, and the

mere accidental and temporary difference of power being, if not the greatest, at least the most obvious circumstance, which, in all ages, has distinguished the persecutor from the persecuted.

The more important the subject of difference, the *greater*, not the *less*, will be the indulgence of him who has learned to trace the sources of human error,—of error, that has its origin not in our weakness and imperfection merely, but often in the most virtuous affections of the heart,—in that respect for age, and admiration of virtue, and gratitude for kindness received, which make the opinions of those whom we love and honour seem to us, in our early years, as little questionable, as the virtues which we love to contemplate, or the very kindness which we feel at every moment beaming on our heart, in the tender protection that surrounds us. That the subjects on which we may differ from others, are important to happiness, of course implies, that it is no slight misfortune to have erred; and that the mere error, therefore, must be already too great an evil to require any addition from our individual contempt or indignation, far less from the vengeance of public authority,—that *may* be right, in the opinions which it conceives to be insulted by partial dissent; but which *must* be wrong, in the means which it takes to avenge them. To be sincerely thankful for truths received, is, by the very nature of the feeling, to be sensible how great a blessing those have lost who are deprived of the same enjoyment; and to look down, then, with insolent disdain, on the unfortunate victim of error, is, indeed to render contemptible (as far as it is in our feeble power to render it contemptible), not the error which we despise, but the truth which allows us to despise it.

Beside these general advantages, which the Philosophy of Mind extends to all the inquiries of which human genius is capable, there are some advantages more peculiarly felt in certain departments of science or art. It is not merely *with* the mind that we operate; the subject of our operations is also often the *mind itself*. In education, in criticism, in poetry, in eloquence, the mind has to act upon mind, to produce in it either emotions that are *temporary*, or affections and opinions that are *permanent*. We have to instruct it,—to convince it,—to persuade it,—to delight it,—to soften it with pity,—to agitate it with terror or indignation;—and all these effects, when other circumstances of genius are the same, we shall surely be able to produce more readily, if we know the natural laws of thought and emotion; the feelings which are followed by other feelings; and the thoughts, which, expanding into other thoughts, almost of themselves produce the very passion, or conviction, which we wish to excite.

"One considerable advantage," says Mr. Hume, "which results from the accurate and abstract philosophy, is its subserviency to the easy and humane ; which, without the former, can never attain a sufficient degree of exactness in its sentiments, precepts, or reasonings. All polite letters are nothing but pictures of human life in various attitudes and situations ; and inspire us with different sentiments of praise or blame, admiration or ridicule, according to the qualities of the object which they set before us. An artist must be better qualified to succeed in this undertaking, who, besides a delicate taste and quick apprehension, possesses an accurate knowledge of the internal fabric, the operations of the understanding, the workings of the passions, and the various species of sentiment which discriminate vice and virtue. However painful this inward search or inquiry may appear, it becomes, in some measure, requisite to those who would describe with success the obvious and outward appearances of life and manners. The anatomist presents to the eye the most hideous and disagreeable objects ; but his science is highly useful to the painter in delineating even a Venus or an Helen. While the latter employs all the richest colours of his art, and gives his figures the most graceful and engaging airs, he must still carry his attention to the inward structure of the human body, the position of the muscles, the fabric of the bones, and the use and figure of every part or organ. Accuracy is, in every case, advantageous to beauty, and just reasoning to delicacy of sentiment ;—in vain would we exalt the one by depreciating the other." \*

What is the whole art of criticism, in its most important applications, but the knowledge of the most natural successions of thought and feeling in the mind ? We judge of the perspicuity and order of a discourse, by knowing the progress in which the mind, by the developement of truth after truth, may be made at last to see the full meaning of the most complex proposition. We judge of the beauty of impassioned poetry or eloquence, by knowing whether the figures, the images, the very feelings described, be such as, from our observation of the laws that regulate the internal series of changes in the mind, we know to be consistent with that state of emotion, in which a mind must exist that has been placed in the situation supposed. If all other circumstances be equal, he will undoubtedly be the best critic, who knows best the phenomena of human thought and feeling ; and, without this knowledge, criticism can be nothing but a measurement of words, or a repetition of

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\* Inquiry concerning the Human Understanding, sec. I.

the ever repeated and endless commonplaces of rhetoric. The knowledge of *nature*,—of the necessity of which critics speak so much, and so justly, and which is as essential to the critic himself, as to the writer on whom he sits in judgment,—is only another name for the knowledge of the successive transitions of feeling of the mind, in all the innumerable diversities in which it is capable of being modified, by the variety of circumstances in which it may be placed. It is for this reason, that, with so great an abundance of the mere *art*, or rather of the mere technical phrases of criticism, we have so very little of the *science* of it; because the science of criticism implies an acquaintance with the philosophy of thought and passion, which few can be expected to possess. And though nothing can be easier than to deliver opinions, such as pass current in the drawing-room, and even in the literary circle, which the frivolous may admire as profound, and the ignorant as erudite, and which many voices may be proud to repeat; though even the dull and pedantic are as able as the wise to say, in fluent language, that one passage of a work of genius is beautiful, and another the reverse,—because one of them is in accordance with some technical rules, or because Homer and Milton have passages similar to the one, and not to the other; it is far from being equally easy to show, how the one passage is beautiful, from its truth of character, and the other, though perhaps rich in harmony of rhythm and rhetorical ornament, is yet faulty, by its violation of the more important harmony of thought and emotion,—a harmony which nature observes as faithfully, in the progress of those vehement passions that appear most wild and irregular, as in the calmest successions of feeling of the most tranquil hours. It would indeed, be too much to say, as in the well known couplet of Pope,

“Let such teach others who themselves excel,  
And censure freely who have written well;”\*

for the critic requires only *one* of the *two* great talents, which, in the poet, ought to exist together, but which may yet exist separately. In the poet, there must be, in the first place, an inventive fancy, to bring together thoughts and images which have never been combined before; and with this inventive fancy, a discriminating judgment, which is to measure, by the standard of nature, the products of invention; and to retain them, only if they appear such, as though perhaps never before combined, might yet, in conformity with the natural laws of thought,

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\* Essay on Criticism, v. 15, 16.

have occurred to a mind, in the circumstances represented, as truly, as the other thoughts or images, which the works of other poets have rendered more familiar. This latter talent,—the judgment which determines the intrinsic beauty and fidelity to general nature,—is all which is absolutely requisite to the *critic*, who is not, therefore, under the necessity of being himself “the great sublime” which he draws. Yet, though all the elements of excellence in the artist are not absolutely requisite for the judgment of the sage and discriminating admirer of the noble works which that excellence may have produced, some of these elements unquestionably are requisite,—elements for which the critic may search in vain in all the rules of rhetoricians, and even in the perusal of all the masterpieces of ancient and modern times, unless, to an acquaintance with these, he add an accurate acquaintance with that *intellectual and moral nature of man*, the beautiful conformity to which was the essential charm of all the pathos, and all the eloquence, which he has admired.

There is another art, however, to which knowledge of the intellectual and moral nature of man is still more important—that noble art, which has the charge of training the ignorance and imbecility of infancy into all the virtue, and power, and wisdom of maturer manhood,—of forming, of a creature, the frailest and feeblest perhaps which Heaven has made, the intelligent and fearless sovereign of the whole animated creation, the interpreter, and adorer, and almost the representative of the Divinity. The art which performs a transformation so wondrous, cannot but be admirable in itself; and it is from observation of the laws of mind, that all which is most admirable in it is derived. These laws we must follow indeed, since they exist not by our contrivance, but by the contrivance of that nobler wisdom, from which the very existence of the mind has flowed; yet, if we know them well, we can *lead* them, in a great measure, even while we *follow* them. And, while the helpless subject of this great moral art is every moment requiring our aid,—with an understanding that may rise, from truth to truth, to the sublimest discoveries, or may remain sunk forever in ignorance, and with susceptibilities of vice that may be repressed, and of virtue that may be cherished,—can we know too well the means of checking what is evil, and of fostering what is good? It is too late to lie by, in indolent indulgence of affection, till vice be already formed in the little being whom we love, and to labour then to remove it, and to substitute the virtue that is opposite to it. Vice already formed, is almost beyond our power. It is only in the state of latent propensity,

that we can with much reason expect to overcome it by the moral motives which we are capable of presenting; and to distinguish this propensity before it has expanded itself, and even before it is known to the very mind in which it exists,—to tame those passions which are never to rage, and to prepare, at a distance, the virtues of other years,—implies a knowledge of the mental constitution, which can be acquired only by a diligent study of the nature, and progress, and successive transformations of feeling. It is easy to know, that praise or censure, reward or punishment, may increase or lessen the tendency to the repetition of any particular action; and this, together with the means of elementary instruction, is all which is commonly termed *education*. But the true science of education is something far more than this. It implies a skilful observation of the past, and that long foresight of the future, which experience and judgment united afford. It is the art of seeing, not the *immediate effect* only, but the *series of effects* which may follow any particular thought or feeling, in the infinite variety of possible combinations,—the art often of drawing virtue from apparent evil, and of averting evil that may rise from apparent good. It is, in short, the philosophy of the human mind applied practically to the human mind,—enriching it, indeed, with all that is useful or ornamental in knowledge, but at the same time giving its chief regard to objects of yet greater moment,—averting evil, which all the sciences together could not compensate, or producing good, compared with which all the sciences together are as nothing.

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## CHAPTER II.

### RELATION OF THE PHILOSOPHY OF MIND TO THE CULTIVATION OF MORAL FEELING.

It remains still to point out some moral effects, which the study of the mind produces in the *inquirer himself*.

One very powerful and salutary influence of moral science arises directly from the mere contemplation of the objects with which it is conversant,—the benevolent affections, the pleasure which attends these, the sacrifices that are made by generous virtue, and all the sublime admiration which they excite,—the sordid and malevolent, and joyless passions of the selfish,—the fear and shame that attend the guilty in society, and the horrors that, with a certainty of constant return more

dreadful than their very presence, await them in their solitary hours. It is good to have these often before us, and to trace and contrast all the immediate, and all the remote effects of vice and virtue, even though we should form, at the time, no direct reference to our own past or future conduct. Without any such reference to ourselves, we must still be sensible of the pleasure and serene confidence which attend the one, and of the insecurity and remorse which forever hang over the other; and the remaining impressions of love and disgust will have an influence on our future conduct, of which we may probably be altogether unconscious at the time. It is, in truth, like the influence of the example of those with whom we habitually associate, which no one perceives at any particular moment, though all are at every moment subject to it; and to meditate often on virtue and happiness, is thus almost to dwell in a sort of social communion with the virtuous and happy. The influence of moral conceptions has, in this respect, been compared to that of light, which it is impossible to approach, without deriving from it some faint colouring, even though we should not sit in the very sunshine,—or to that of precious odours, amid which we cannot long remain, without bearing away with us some portion of the fragrance. \*

The process by which this moral benefit arises from the mere contemplation of moral objects, frequently repeated, depends on the influence of the *associating principle* in the mind,—of that principle, by which ideas and other feelings, that have often co-existed, acquire, for ever after, an almost indissoluble union. It is not merely, therefore, by having traced, more accurately than others, the consequences of vice and virtue, as affecting the general character, that the lover of moral science strengthens his admiration of virtue, and his abhorrence of vice. But, by the frequent consideration of virtue, together with the happiness which it affords, and of vice, together with its consequent misery, the notions of these become so permanently and so deeply associated, that future virtue appears almost like happiness about to be enjoyed, and future vice like approaching misery. The dread of misery, and the love of happiness, which are essential principles of our very *physical existence* are thus transformed into principles of *moral conduct*, that operate, before reflection, with the rapidity, and almost with the energy of instincts,—and that, after reflection, add to our virtuous resolutions a force and stability, which, as results of mere reasoning, they could not possess.

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\* Seneca, Ep. 108.



It is, besides, no small advantage of the abstract consideration of virtue as opposed to the miseries of vice, that, in considering these philosophically, we regard them as stripped of every thing that can blind or seduce us; and we behold them, therefore, truly as they are. It is not in the madness of intemperate enjoyment, that we see drunkenness in the goblet, and disease in the feast. Under the actual seduction of a passion, we see dimly, if we see at all, any of the evils to which it leads; and if the feelings, of which we are then conscious, were those which were for ever after to be associated with the remembrance of the passion, it would appear to us an object, not of disgust or abhorrence, but of delight and choice, and almost of a sort of moral approbation. It is of importance, then, that we should consider the passion, at other moments than these, that the images associated with it may be not of that brief and illusive pleasure, which stupefies its unfortunate victim, but of its true inherent character, of deformity, and of the contempt and hatred which it excites in others. Such is the advantage of the point of view, in which it is seen by the moral inquirer, to whom it presents itself, not under its momentary character of pleasure, but under its lasting character of pain and disgust. By habituating himself to consider the remote, as well as the immediate results of all the affections and passions, he learns to regard virtue, not merely as good in itself, at the moment in which it is called into exercise, but as an inexhaustible source of good which is continually increasing; and vice, not merely as a temporary evil in itself, but as a source of permanent and yet deeper misery and degradation. Every generous principle, which nature has given him, is thus continually deriving new strength, from the very contemplation of the good which it affords; and if, in the frailty of mortality, he should still be subject to the occasional influence of those very passions, which, in cooler moments, he detests, he yet does not fall thoroughly and hopelessly. There are lingering associations of moral beauty and happiness in his mind, which may save him still,—associations that must render it, in some degree at least, more difficult for him than for others, to yield to seductions, of which he has long known the vanity, and which perhaps even may, in some happier hour, lead him back to that virtue, of which he has never wholly forgotten the charms.

Another most important advantage derived from the study of moral science, relates to us in our higher character of beings *capable of religion*, increasing our devotion and gratitude to the Divinity, by the clearest manifestation which it gives us of his provident goodness in the constitution and government of the moral world.

The external universe, indeed, though our study were confined to the laws which regulate its phenomena, would afford, in itself, abundant proof of the power and wisdom by which it was created. But power and wisdom *alone* excite admiration only, not love ; which, though it may be feigned in the homage that is universally paid to power, is yet, as an offering of the heart, paid to it only when it is combined with benevolence. It is the splendid benevolence, therefore, of the Supreme Being, which is the object of our grateful adoration ; and, to discover this benevolence, we must look to creatures that have not existence merely, like inanimate things, but a capacity of enjoyment, and means of enjoyment. It is in man,—or in beings capable of knowledge and happiness, like man,—that we find the solution of the wonders of the creation ; which would otherwise, with all its regularity and beauty, be but a solitary waste, like the barren magnificence of rocks and deserts.

In the study of what might be considered as the very defects of our moral nature, how pleasing is it, to the philosophic inquirer, to discover that provident arrangement of a higher Power, which has rendered many of the most striking of the apparent evils of life subservient to the production of a general utility, that had never entered into the contemplation of its remote authors. He who has never studied the consequences of human actions, perceives, in the great concourse of mankind, only a multitude of beings, consulting each his own peculiar interest, or the interest of the very small circle immediately around him, with little, if any, apparent attention to the interests of others. But he who has truly studied human actions and their consequences, sees, in the prosecution of all these separate interests, that universal interest which is their great result ; and the very principle of self-regard thus contributing to social happiness,—unconsciously indeed, but almost as surely as the principle of benevolence itself.

The tolerance with which we receive the opinions of others is a part, and an indispensable part, of that general refinement of manners to which we give the name of *politeness*. But politeness itself, in all its most important respects,—indeed in every respect, in which it is to be separated from the mere fluctuating and arbitrary forms and ceremonies of the month or year,—is nothing more than *knowledge of the human mind directing general benevolence*. It is the art of producing the greatest happiness, which, in the mere external courtesies of life, can be produced, by raising such ideas or other feelings in the minds of those with whom we are conversant, as will afford the most pleasure, and averting, as much as possible, every idea which may lead to

pain. It implies, therefore, when perfect, a fine knowledge of the natural series of thoughts, so as to distinguish, not merely the thought which will be the immediate or near effect of what is said or done, but those which may arise still more remotely; and he is the most successful in this art of giving happiness, who sees the future at the greatest distance. It is this foresight acquired by attentive observation of the various characters of mankind in a long intercourse with society, which is the true knowledge of the world; for the knowledge of the mere forms and ceremonies of the world, which is of far easier acquisition, is scarcely worthy of being called a part of it. The essential, and the only valuable part of politeness, then, is as truly the result of study of the human mind, as if its minutest rules had formed a regular part of our systems of intellectual and moral philosophy.

How much politeness consists in knowledge of the natural succession of thoughts and feelings, and a consequent ready foresight of the series of thoughts, which it is in our power indirectly to excite or avert, must have presented itself in a very striking manner to every one, whose professional duties, or other circumstances, have led him to pay attention to the lower orders of society. The most benevolent of the poor, in situations too in which their benevolence is most strongly excited, as in the sickness of their relations or friends, and in which they exert themselves to relieve obvious pain, with an assiduity of watching and fatigue, after all the ordinary fatigues of the day, that is truly honourable to their tenderness, have yet little foresight of the mere pains of thought; and while in the same situation, the rich and better educated, with equal, or perhaps even with less benevolence of intention, carefully avoid the introduction of any subject, which might suggest indirectly to the sufferer the melancholy images of parting life, the conversation of the poor, around the bed of their sick friend, is such as can scarcely fail to present to him every moment, not the probability merely, but almost the certainty of approaching death. It is impossible to be present, in these two situations, without remarking the benefit of a little knowledge of the human mind, without which, far from fulfilling its real wishes, benevolence itself may be the most cruel of tortures.

The same species of foresight which is essential to the refinements of social intercourse, is equally essential in the active occupations of life, to that knowledge of times and circumstances, which is so important to success; and though this knowledge may be too often abused, to unworthy purposes, by the sordid and the servile, it is

not the less necessary to those who pursue only honourable plans, and who avail themselves of honourable means. Such is the nature of society, that the most generous and patriotic designs still require some *conduct* to procure for them authority; and, at least in the public situations of life, without a knowledge of the nature both of those who are to govern, and of those who are to be governed, though it may be very easy to wish well to society, the hardest of all tasks will be the task of doing it good.

May I not add, as another salutary moral effect of the Science of Mind, the tendency which the study of the general properties of our common nature has to lessen that undue veneration, which, in civilized society, must always attend the adventitious circumstances of fortune, and to bring this down, at least some degrees, nearer to that due respect which is indispensable for the tranquillity and good order of a state, and which no wise and patriotic moralist, therefore, would wish to see diminished. It is only in the tumultuous phrenzy of a revolution, however, or in periods of great and general discontent, that the respect of the multitude for those who are elevated above them, in rank and fortune, is likely to fall beneath this salutary point. So many of the strongest principles of our nature, favour the *excess* of it, that, in the ordinary circumstances of society, it must always pass far beyond the point of calm respect; so far beyond it indeed, that the lesson which the people require most frequently to be taught, is, not to venerate the very guilt and folly of the rich and powerful, because they are the guilt and folly of the rich and powerful. It is to the objects of the idolatry themselves, however, that the study of a science, which considers them as stripped of every adventitious distinction, and possessing only the common virtues and talents of mankind, must be especially salutary. In the ordinary circumstances of a luxurious age, it is scarcely possible for the great to consider themselves as what they truly are; and though, if questioned as to their belief of their common origin with the rest of mankind, they would no doubt think the question an absurd one, and readily own their descent from the same original parentage; there can be as little doubt, that in the silence of their own mind, and in those hours of vanity and ambition, which, to many of them, are almost the whole of the hours of life, this tie of common nature is rarely, if ever felt. It is impossible indeed, that it should be often felt, because, in the circumstances in which they are placed, there is every thing to remind them of a superiority, of which their passions themselves are sufficiently ready to remind them, and very

little to remind them of an equality, from the contemplation of which all their passions are as ready to turn away. There are, however, some circumstances which are too strong for all these passions to overcome, and which force in spite of them, upon the mind that self-knowledge, which in other situations, it is easy to avoid. In pain and sickness, notwithstanding all the vain magnificence which the pride of grandeur spreads around the couch, and the profusion of untasted delicacies, with which officious tenderness strives to solicit an appetite that loathes them, he who lies upon the couch within, begins to learn his own nature, and sees through the splendour that seems to surround him, as it were, without touching him, how truly foreign it is to that existence, of which before it seemed to form a part. The feeling that he is but a *man*, in the true sense of that word, as a frail and dependant being like those around him, is one of the first feelings, and perhaps not one of the least painful, which arise in such a situation. The impression, however, of this common nature, is, while it lasts, a most salutary one; and it is to be regretted only, that health cannot return without bringing back with it all those flattering circumstances which offer the same seductions as before to his haughty superiority.

The sight of death, or of the great home of the dead, in like manner seldom fails to bring before us our common and equal nature. In spite of all the little distinctions which a churchyard exhibits, in mimic imitation, and almost in mockery, of the great distinctions of life, the turf, the stone with its petty sculptures, and all the columns and images of the marble monument; as we read the inscription, or walk over the sod, we think only of what lies beneath in undistinguishable equality. There is scarcely any one on whom these two great equalizing objects, sickness and the sight of death, have not produced, for a short time, at least, some salutary moral impression. But these are objects which cannot often occur, and which are accompanied with too many distressing circumstances, to render it desirable that they should be of very frequent occurrence. The study of the *mind*, of our common, moral, and intellectual nature, and of those common hopes which await us, as immortal beings, seems in some degree to afford the advantage, without the mixture of evil; for, though in such speculative inquiries, the impression may be less striking than when accompanied with painful circumstances, it is more permanent, because, from the absence of those powerful circumstances, it is more frequently and willingly renewed. In the philosophy of mind, all those heraldic differences which have converted mere human vanity into a

science, are as nothing. It is *man* that is the object of investigation, and man with no distinctions that are adventitious. The feelings, the faculties, which we consider, are endowments of the rich and powerful indeed ; but they are endowments also of the meanest of those on whom they look with disdain. It is something, then, for those whose thoughts are continually directed by external circumstances to that perilous elevation on which they placed, to be led occasionally, as in such inquiries they must be, to measure themselves and others without regard to the accidental differences of the heights on which they stand, and to see what it is in which they truly differ, and what it is in which they truly agree.

In the remarks already made, on the study of the Science of Mind, we have considered its effects on the progress of the other sciences, and on the moral dispositions. But, though the study had no effects of this kind, moral or intellectual, is not the mind itself a part of nature, and as a mere *physical object*, deserving of our profoundest and most intent investigation ? or shall it be said, that while we strive, not merely to measure the whole earth, and to follow in our thought the revolutions of those great orbs, whose majesty may almost be said to force from us this homage of admiration, but to arrange, in distinct tribes, those animalcular atoms, whose very existence we learn only from the glass through which we view them ; the observing and calculating mind itself is less an object of universal science, than the antennæ of an insect, or the filaments of a weed ? Would it be no reproach to man, even though he knew all things besides, that he yet knew far less accurately than he might know, his own internal nature, —like voyagers who delight in visiting every coast of the most distant country, without the slightest acquaintance, perhaps, with the interior of their own ?

To the *mind*, considered as a mere object of physical inquiry, there is one circumstance of interest, that is peculiar. It is the part of our mixed nature which we have especially in view as often as we think of *self*,—that by which we began to exist, and continue to exist, by which in every moment of our being, we have rejoiced, and hoped, and feared, and loved ; or rather, as it is that which has been itself, in all our emotions, the rejoicer, the hoper, the fearer. To inquire into the history of the mind, therefore, is in truth to look back, as far as it is permitted to us to look back, on the whole history of our life. It is to think of those many pleasing emotions which delighted us when present, or of those sadder feelings, which when considered as

past, become delightful, almost like the feelings that were in themselves originally pleasing, and, in many cases, are reviewed with still greater interest. We cannot attempt to think of the origin of our knowledge, without bringing before us scenes and persons most tenderly familiar; and though the effect of such remembrances is perhaps less powerful, when the mind is prepared for philosophical investigation, than in moments in which it is more passive, still the influence is not wholly lost. He must be a very cold philosopher indeed, who, even in intellectual analysis, can retrace the early impressions of his youth, with as little interest as that with which he looks back on the common occurrences of the past day.

But it is not any slight interest which it may receive from such peculiar remembrances, that can be said to give value to the philosophy of mind. It furnishes, in itself, the sublimest of all speculations, because it is the philosophy of the sublimest of all created things. "There is but one object," says St. Augustine, "greater than the soul, and that one is its Creator." When we consider the powers of his mind, even without reference to the wonders which he has produced on earth, what room does man afford for astonishment and admiration! His senses, his memory, his reason, the past, the present, the future, the whole universe, and, if the universe have any limits, even more than the whole universe, comprised in a single thought; and, amid all these changes of feelings that succeed each other in rapid and endless variety, a permanent and unchangeable duration, compared with which, the duration of external things is but the existence of a moment.

Such, in dignity and grandeur, is the mind, considered even abstractedly. But when, instead of considering the mind itself, we look to the wonders which it has performed,—the cities, the cultivated plains, and all the varieties of that splendid scene to which the art of man has transformed the deserts, and forests, and rocks of original nature; when we behold him, not limiting the operations of his art to that earth to which he seemed confined, but bursting through the very elements, that appeared to encircle him as an insurmountable barrier—traversing the waves—struggling with the winds, and making their very opposition subservient to his course; when we look to the still greater transformations which he has wrought in the *moral scene*, and compare with the miseries of barbarous life, the tranquillity and security of a well ordered state; when we see, under the influence of legislative wisdom, insurmountable multitudes obeying, in op-

position to their strongest passions, the restraints of a power which they scarcely perceive, and the crimes of a single individual marked and punished, at the distance of half the earth ; is it possible for us to observe all these wonders, and yet not to feel some curiosity to examine the faculties by which they have been wrought, some interest in a being so noble, that leads us to speculate on the future wonders which he may yet perform, and on the final destiny which awaits him ? This interest we should feel, though no common tie connected us with the object of our admiration ; and we cannot surely admit that the object of our admiration is less interesting to us, or less sublime in nature, because the faculties which we admire are those which ourselves possess, and the wonders such as we are capable of achieving and surpassing.

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### CHAPTER III.

#### OF THE NATURE OF PHYSICAL INQUIRY IN GENERAL.

##### SECTION I.

THE first great division of our course of inquiry is purely physiological. It has for its object the mind, considered as susceptible of various states or affections, and constituting, as it is thus variously affected, the whole of the phenomena of thought and feeling, which, though expressed by a variety of terms, of functions, or faculties, are still but the *one* mind itself existing in different states. On retracing these states, which form the whole progress of our sentient, intellectual, and moral life, we have to inquire into the properties of the substance, mind, according to the same laws of investigation, by which we inquire into the properties of external substances,—not by assuming principles, from which the phenomena may be supposed to flow, but by observing and generalizing, till we arrive at those few simple principles or laws, which are nothing more than the expression of the most general circumstances, in which the phenomena themselves have been felt by us to agree. As we say of gold, that it is that which is of a certain specific weight, yellow, ductile, fusible at a certain temperature, and capable of certain combinations,—because all these properties have been observed by ourselves or others,—so we say of the *mind*, that it is that which perceives, remembers, compares, and is susceptible of



various emotions or other feelings ; because of all these we have been conscious, or have observed them indirectly in others. The exact coincidence, in this respect, of the physics of mind and of matter, it is important that we should have constantly before us, that we may not be led to regard the comparative indistinctness and vagueness of the mental phenomena as a warrant for greater boldness of assertion, and looseness of reasoning, with respect to them. There is, on the contrary, in such a case, still greater reason to adhere rigidly to the strict rules of philosophizing ; because the less definite the phenomena are, the greater danger is there of being misled in discriminating and classing them. The laws of inquiry, those general principles of the logic of physics, which regulate our search of truth in all things, external and internal, do not vary with the name of a science, or its objects or instruments. They are not laws of one science, but of every science, whether the objects of it be mental or material, clear or obscure, definite or indefinite ; and they are thus universal, because, in truth, though applicable to many sciences, they are only laws of *the one inquiring mind*, founded on the weakness of its powers of discernment, in relation to the complicated phenomena on which those powers are exercised. The sort of reasoning which would be false in chemistry, would be false in astronomy, would be false in the physiology of our corporeal or intellectual and moral nature, and in all, for the same reason ; because the mind is the inquirer in all alike, and is limited, by the very constitution of its faculties, to a certain order of inquiry, which it must, in this case of supposed erroneous reasoning, have transgressed.

All physical science, whatever may be the variety of objects, mental or material, to which it is directed, is nothing more than the comparison of phenomena, and the discovery of their agreement or disagreement, or order of succession. It is on *observation*, therefore, or on consciousness, which is only another name for *internal* observation, that the whole of science is founded ; because there can be no comparison, without observation of the phenomena compared, and no discovery of agreement or disagreement, without comparison. So far, then, as man has observed the phenomena of matter or of mind, so far, and no farther, may he infer, with confidence, the properties of matter and of mind.

What is it that we truly have in view, or should have in view, when we inquire into the nature of a substance ?

The material universe, and all the separate substances which compose it, may be considered in *two* lights,—either simply, as composed of parts that co-exist, and are to our feelings continuous, so as to form, of many separate and independent elements, one apparent whole ; or of parts that change their relative positions, constituting, by this change of place, all the physical events of the material system of the world ; and inquiry may have reference to a substance in both, or either of those points of view. What is this body ? may be inquired of us, when any particular body is pointed out ; and the answer which we give will be very different, according to the particular light in which we may have viewed it, though it must always relate to it in one or other of these two aspects. Let us suppose, for example, the body, concerning which the question is put, to be a piece of glass ; and our answer will vary, as I have said, with the view which we take of it. If we consider it merely as a *continuous whole*, our answer will be, that it is a *compound of alkaline and siliceous matter*,—meaning that particles of alkali and flint co-exist, and are apparently continuous, in that mass of which we speak.

Such is *one* of the answers which may be given to the question ; and this sort of answer is one which is very commonly given to such questions. It is nothing more than the enumeration of the constituent parts of the substance, and considers the substance simply as it exists alone, without regard to any other bodies that may exist around it or near it, and without any allusion to change of any kind.

This sort of view, however, may be altogether reversed ; and, instead of thinking of the parts that exist together in the substance, without reference to any changes, of which it is either the agent or the subject, we may think only of such changes, without reference to its constituent parts.

In this latter point of view, we may say, in answer to the question, as to the nature of the substance termed glass, that it is a transparent substance, which, according to the general laws of refraction, bends the light that passes through it variously, according to the different density of the medium through which the rays have immediately passed before arriving at it, or of the medium through which they are to pass after penetrating it ; that it is a substance fusible at a certain temperature, not dissolved by the common powerful acids, but soluble in a particular acid termed the *fluoric* acid ; that, when strongly rubbed by certain other substances, it communicates, for a time, to various bodies, the power of attracting or repelling other bodies ; and we may add to our

description, in like manner, as many other qualities as there are various substances which produce in it any change, or are in any way changed by it. In all answers of this kind, regard is uniformly had, not to the mere substance, concerning which the question is put, but also to some other substance with which, in consequence of some motion of one or other of the bodies, at the time of the phenomenon of which we speak, it has changed its relative position; for, if all the objects in nature remained constantly at rest, it is very evident that we could have no notion of any property of matter whatever. In the enumeration of the qualities of glass, for example, when we speak of its properties, we suppose it to have changed, in every case, some relative position with the light that passes through it, the heat that melts it, the fluoric acid that dissolves it, and the various bodies that excite in it, or conduct from it, electricity; and all these bodies, therefore, we must have in view, in our enumeration, as much as the glass itself.

As there are only these two different aspects in which matter can be viewed, all physical inquiry, with respect to matter, must have reference to one of them; and if we think that we are inquiring further concerning it, our inquiry is truly without an object, and we know not what we seek. We may consider it, simply as it exists in *space*, or as it exists in *time*. Any substance, considered as it exists in space, is the mere name which ourselves give to the co-existence of a multitude of bodies, similar in nature, or dissimilar, in apparent continuity; considered as it exists in time, it is that which is affected by the prior changes of other bodies, or which itself produces a change of some sort in other bodies. As it exists in space, therefore, we inquire into its *composition*, or, in other words, endeavour to discover what are the elementary bodies that co-exist in the space which it occupies, and that are all which we truly consider, when we think that we are considering the compound as one distinct body. As it exists in time, we inquire into its *susceptibilities* or its *powers*, or, in other words, endeavour to trace all the series of prior and subsequent changes, of which its presence forms an intermediate link.

This, then, is our meaning, when we speak of inquiring into the nature of a substance. We have one or both of two objects in view; the discovery of the separate bodies that co-exist in the substance, or rather that constitute the substance, which is nothing more than the separate bodies themselves; or the discovery of that series of changes, of which the presence of this particular substance, in some new relative position with respect to other bodies, forms a part; the changes

which other bodies, in consequence of this altered relative position, occasion in it, with the changes which it occasions in other bodies.

To inquire into the composition of a substance, is to consider as *one*, many substances, which have not the less an independant existence, because they are in an immediate proximity to each other. What we term a *body*, however minute, is a multitude of bodies, or to speak more exactly, an infinite number of bodies, which appear limited to us, indeed, but may perhaps appear in their true character of infinity, to beings of a higher order, who may be able to distinguish as infinite, what our limited senses allow us to perceive only as finite. They are *one*, not in nature, but in our thought; as one thousand individuals, that in nature must always be one thousand, receive a sort of unity that is relative merely to our conception, when ranked by us as a single regiment, or as many regiments become *one* by forming together an army. In the energies of external matter, the innumerable separate bodies are thus regarded by us as *one*, when the space which divides them is not measurable by our imperfect vision, and as distinct or separate, when the space can be measured by us. The *unity* of the aggregate is here no absolute quality of the mass, but is truly relative to the observer's power of distinguishing the component parts; the mass being one or many, as his senses are less or better able to distinguish these. This whole globe of earth, with its oceans, and rivers, and mountains, and woods, and with all the separate multitudes of its animated inhabitants, may seem to some being of another species, only one continuous and uniform mass; as the masses, that seem to us uniform and continuous, may seem a whole world of separate and varied parts, to the insect population that swarms upon its surface. "A single leaf of a tree," to borrow an obvious illustration from a French writer, "is a little world inhabited by invisible animals, to whose senses it appears of immense extent, who see in it mountains and abysses that are almost immeasurable, and who, from one side of the leaf to the other, hold as little communication with the opposite animalcula, who have their dwellings there, as we do with our Antipodes." \*

Nothing can appear to our eyes more uniform than a piece of glass; yet we know, from its composition, as a product of art, that it is a congeries of bodies, which have no similarity to each other, and which truly exist separately from each other, in the compound, as they existed separately before the composition, though the lines of space

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\* Fontenelle, *Pluralité des Mondes*, Converg. 3.

which divide them have now ceased to be visible to our weak organs ; and though, instead of being composed of alkaline and siliceous matter, which we know to be different in their qualities, the beautiful transparent substance, considered by us, were, as far as we know, *simple*, in the chemical sense of the term, it would still be as truly an aggregate of many bodies, not dissimilar, indeed, as in the former case, but each similar in qualities, to the aggregate itself. The aggregate, in short, is, in every case, but a name invented by ourselves ; and what we term the constituent elements, are all that truly exists.

To dissipate this imaginary aggregate of our own creation, and to show us those separate bodies which occupy its space, and are all that nature created, is the great office of the analytic art of Chemistry, which does for us only what the microscope does, that enables us to see the small objects which are before us at all times, without our being able to distinguish them. When a chemist tells us, that glass, which appears to us one uniform substance, is composed of different substances, he tells us, what with livelier perceptive organs, we might have known, without a single experiment ; since the siliceous matter and the alkali were present to us in every piece of glass, as much before he told us of their presence, as after it. The art of analysis, therefore, has its origin in the mere imperfection of our senses, and is truly the art of the blind, whose wants it is always striving to remedy, and always discovering sufficient proof of its inability to remedy them.

We boast, indeed, of the chemical discoveries which we have made of late, with a rapidity of progress as brilliant, as it is unexampled in the history of any other science ; and we boast justly, because we have found, what the generations of inquirers that have preceded us on our globe,—far from detecting,—had not even ventured to guess. Without alluding to the agency of the *Galvanic power*,—by which all nature seems to be assuming before us a different aspect,—we have seen fixed in the products of our common fires, and in the drossy rust of metals, the purest part of the ethereal fluid which we breathe, and the air itself, which was so long considered as simple, ceasing to be an element. Yet whatever unsuspected similarities and diversities of composition we may have been able to trace in bodies, all our discoveries have not created a single new particle of matter. They have only shown these to exist, where they always existed, as much before our analysis as after it,—unmarked indeed, but unmarked only because our senses alone were not capable of making the nice discrimination. If man had been able to perceive, with his mere organs of sense, the different

particles that form together the atmospheric air,—if he had at all times seen the portion of these which unites with the fuel that warms him, enter into this union, as distinctly as he sees the mass of fuel itself, which he flings into his furnace, he could not have thought it a very great intellectual achievement, to state in words so common and familiar a fact,—the mere well-known change of place of a few well-known particles; and yet this is what, in the imperfect state of his perceptive organs, he so proudly terms his *Theory of Combustion*, the development of which was hailed by a wondering world, and in these circumstances, justly hailed by it, as a *scientific era*. To beings, capable of perceiving and distinguishing the different particles, that form by their aggregation those small masses, which, after the minutest mechanical division of which we are capable, appear atoms to us, the pride which we feel in our chemical analyses must seem as ludicrous, as to us would seem the pride of the blind, if one, who had never enjoyed the opportunity of beholding the sun, were to boast of having discovered, by a nice comparison of the changing temperature of bodies, that, during certain hours of the day, there passed over our earth some great source of heat. The addition of one new sense to us, who have already the inestimable advantages which vision affords, might probably, in a few hours, communicate more instruction, with respect to matter, than all which is ever to repay and consummate the physical labours of mankind,—giving, perhaps, to a single glance, those slow revelations of nature, which, one by one, at intervals of many centuries, are to immortalize the future sages of our race.

There is something truly worthy of our astonishment, in the sort of knowledge of the qualities of matter, which, with our very imperfect senses, we are still able to attain. What we conceive ourselves to know is an aggregate of many bodies, of each of which, individually, we may be said, in the strictest sense of the term, to be absolutely ignorant; and yet the aggregate, which we know, has no real existence, but as that very multitude of bodies, of which we are ignorant. When water was regarded as a *simple substance*, every one who looked upon a lake or river, conceived that he knew as well what the liquid was which flowed in it, as the chemist, who now considers it as compound; and the chemist, who has learned to regard it as compound, is perhaps as ignorant of the true nature of the separate bodies that exist in it, as those who formerly regarded it as simple; since one additional discovery may prove the very elements, which he now regards as the ultimate constituents of water, to be truly compounded of other elements, still more minute, and now altogether unknown to him.

That our only knowledge of matter should be of a multitude of bodies, of the nature of each of which, individually, we are in absolute ignorance, may seem, at first sight, to justify many of the most extravagant doubts of the sceptic ; and yet there is really no ground for such scepticism, since, though the *coexisting* bodies be *separately* unknown, the effect, which they produce when coexisting in the circumstances observed by us, is not the less certain and definite ; and it is this joint effect of the whole, thus certain and definite, which is the true object of our knowledge ; not the uncertain effect, which the minuter elements might produce, if they existed alone. The same aggregates, whatever their elementary nature may be, operate on our senses, as often as they recur, in the same manner ; the unknown elements which constitute an oak or a tower, or the ivy that clings around it, exciting in the mind those particular sensations, to the external causes of which we continue to give the name of *oak* or *tower* or *ivy* ; and exciting these, as precisely and uniformly, as if we were acquainted with each minute element of the objects without. Our knowledge of nature must in this way, indeed, be confined to the *mixed effects* of the masses which it exhibits ; but it is not on that account less valuable, nor less sure ; for to the certainty of this limited knowledge all which is necessary is uniformity of the mixed effects, whatever their unknown coexisting causes may be. It is with *masses* only, not with *elements* that we are concerned in all the important purposes of life ; and the provident wisdom of the Author of Nature, therefore, has in this, as in every other case, adapted our powers to our necessities,—giving to all mankind the knowledge that is requisite for the purposes which all mankind must equally have in view, and leaving to philosophic inquirers the curiosity of discovering what the substances around us truly are in their elementary state, and the means of making continual progress in this never-ending analysis.

## SECTION II.

Such then is the nature of *one* of the views, in which physical inquiry may be directed, to the discovery of elements, that are existing together, at the same moment.

I proceed, next, to consider, what it is which we truly have in view, when we direct our inquiry, not to the mere composition of objects existing continuously in *space*, but to the succession of changes which they exhibit in *time*,—to their susceptibility of being affected by other sub-

stances, or their power of affecting other substances. The inquiry, naturally involves the consideration of some words about which a peculiar mystery has been very generally supposed to hang,—*causation, power, connexion* of events. But we shall perhaps find that what is supposed so peculiarly mysterious in them, is not in the very simple notions themselves, but in the misconceptions of those who have treated of them.

It is not in this case, as in the former department of physical investigation, the mere imperfection of our senses, that produces the necessity of inquiry. Matter, as existing in space, is wholly before us, and all which is necessary for perfect knowledge of it, in this respect, is greater delicacy of our perceptive organs, that we may distinguish every element of the seemingly continuous mass. To know the mere *composition* of a substance, is to know only what is actually present at the very moment, which we may imagine senses of the highest perfection to be capable of instantly perceiving; but to know all the *susceptibilities* and *powers* of a substance, the various modes in which it may affect or be affected by every other, is to know it, not merely as it exists before us in the particular circumstances of any one moment, but as it *might* have existed, or *may* exist, in all possible circumstances of combination,—which our senses, that are necessarily confined to the circumstances of the present moment, never could teach us, even though they were able to distinguish every atom of the minutest mass.

If, indeed, there were any thing, in the mere appearance of a body, which could enable us to predict the changes that would take place in it, when brought into every possible variety of situation, with respect to other bodies, or the changes which it would then produce in these other bodies, the two views, into which I have divided physical inquiry, would coincide exactly; so that to know the *continuous elements* of any substance, would be to know, at the same time, its *susceptibilities* and *powers*. But there is nothing, in the mere sensible qualities of bodies, considered separately, that can give us even the slightest intimation of the changes, which, in *new circumstances of union*, they might reciprocally suffer or produce. Who could infer, from the similar appearance of a lump of sugar and a lump of calcareous spar, that the one would be soluble in water, and the other remain unmelting; or, from the different aspect of gunpowder and snow, that a spark would be extinguished, if it fell upon the one, and, if it fell upon the other, would excite an explosion that would be almost irresistible? But for experience, we should be altogether incapable of predicting any such effects,



from either of the objects compared ; or, if we did know, that the peculiar susceptibility belonged to one of the two, and not to the other, we might as readily suppose, that calcareous spar would melt in water as sugar, and as readily, that snow as that gunpowder would detonate, by the contact of a spark. It is *experience* alone, which teaches us that these effects ever take place, and that they take place, not in all substances, but only in some particular substances.

But experience teaches us the past only, not the future, and the object of physical inquiry is, not the mere solitary fact of a change which has taken place, but the similar changes which will continually take place as often as the objects are again in the same circumstances,—not the *phenomena* only, but the *powers* by which the phenomena are produced.

Why is it, then, we believe that continual similarity of the future to the past, which constitutes, or at least is implied, in our notion of power ? A stone tends to the earth,—a stone will always tend to the earth,—are not the same proposition ; nor can the first be said to involve the second. It is not to experience, then, alone that we must have recourse for the origin of the belief, but to some other principle, which converts the simple facts of experience into a general expectation, or confidence, that is afterwards to be physically the guide of all our plans and actions.

This principle, since it cannot be derived from experience itself, which relates only to the past, must be an original principle of our nature. There is a tendency in the very constitution of the mind from which the expectation arises,—a tendency that, in every thing which it adds to the mere facts of experience, may truly be termed *instinctive* ; for though that term is commonly supposed to imply something peculiarly mysterious, there is no more real mystery in it than in any of the simplest successions of thought, which are all, in like manner, the results of natural tendency of the mind to exist in certain states, after existing in certain other states. The belief is a state or feeling of the mind as easily conceivable as any other state of it,—a new feeling, arising in certain circumstances as uniformly as in certain other circumstances. There arise other states or feelings of the mind, which we never consider as mysterious ; those for example, which we term the sensations of sweetness or of sound. To have our nerves of taste or hearing affected in a certain manner, is not, indeed, to taste or to hear, but it is immediately afterwards to have those particular sensations ; and this merely because the mind was originally so constituted, as to exist di-

rectly in the one state after existing in the other. To observe, in like manner, a series of antecedents and consequents, is not, in the very feeling of the moment, to believe in the future similarity, but in consequence of a similar original tendency, it is immediately afterwards to believe, that the *same antecedents* will invariably be followed by the *same consequents*. That this belief of the future is a state of mind very different from the mere perception or memory of the past, from which it flows, is indeed true ; but what resemblance has sweetness, as a sensation of the mind, to the solution of a few particles of sugar on the tongue,—or the harmonies of music, to the vibration of particles of air ? All which we know, in both cases, is that these successions regularly take place ; and in the regular successions of nature, which could not, in one instance more than in another, have been predicted without experience, nothing is mysterious, or every thing is mysterious. It is wonderful, indeed,—for what is not wonderful ?—that any belief should arise as to a *future*, which as yet has no existence ; and which, therefore, cannot, in the strict sense of the word, be an object of our knowledge. But, when we consider Who it was who formed us, it would, in truth, have been more wonderful, if the mind had been so differently constituted that the belief had not arisen ; because, in that case, the phenomena of nature, however regularly arranged, would have been arranged in vain, and that Almighty Being, who, by enabling us to foresee the physical events that are to arise, has enabled us to provide for them, would have left the creatures, for whom he has been so bounteously provident, to perish, ignorant and irresolute, amid elements that seemed waiting to obey them,—and victims of confusion, in the very midst of all the harmonies of the universe.

Mr. Hume, indeed, has attempted to show, that the belief of the similarity of future sequences of events is reducible to the influence of custom, without the necessity of any intuitive expectation ; but he has completely failed in the reasoning with which he has endeavoured to support this opinion. Custom may account for the mere suggestion of one object by another, as a part of a train of images, but not for that belief of future realities, which is a very different state of mind, and which, perhaps, does not follow every such suggestion, however frequent and habitual. The proposition A, a stone has a thousand times fallen to the earth ; the proposition B, a stone will always, in the same circumstances, fall to the earth ; are propositions that differ as much as the propositions, A, a stone has *once* fallen to the earth ; B, a stone will always fall to the earth. At whatever link of the chain we begin,

we must still meet with the same difficulty,—the conversion of the past into the future. If it be absurd to make this conversion at one stage of inquiry, it is just as absurd to make it at any other stage ; and as far as our memory extends, there never was a time at which we did not make the instant conversion,—no period, however early, at which we were capable of knowing that a stone had fallen, and yet believed that, in exactly the same circumstances, there was no reason to suppose that it would fall again.

We see, in nature, one event followed by another. The fall of a spark on gunpowder, for example, followed by the deflagration of the gunpowder ; and, by a peculiar tendency of our constitution, which we must take for granted, whatever be our theory of power, we believe, that, as long as all the circumstances continue the same, the sequence of events will continue the same ; that the deflagration of gunpowder, for example, will be the *invariable consequence* of the fall of a spark on it ;—in other words, we believe the gunpowder to be *susceptible* of deflagration on the application of a spark,—and a spark to have the *power* of deflagrating gunpowder.

There is nothing more, then, understood in the trains of events, however regular, than the regular order of antecedents and consequents which compose the train ; and between which, if any thing else existed, it would itself be a part of the train. All that we mean, when we ascribe to one substance a susceptibility of being affected by another substance, is, that a certain change will uniformly take place in it when that other is present ;—all that we mean, in like manner when we ascribe to one substance a power of affecting another substance, is, that, when it is present a certain change will uniformly take place in that other substance. Power, in short, is significant, not of any thing different from the invariable antecedent itself, but of the mere invariableness of the order of its appearance in reference to some invariable consequent,—the invariable antecedent being denominated a *cause*, the invariable consequent an *effect*. To say, that water has the power of dissolving salt, and to say, that salt will always melt when water is poured upon it, are to say precisely the same thing ;—there is nothing in the one proposition, which is not exactly, and to the same extent, enunciated in the other.

A *cause* is not that which has merely *once* preceded an event ; but we give the name to that which *has* always been followed by a certain event, *is* followed by a certain event, and according to our belief, *will continue* to be in future followed by that event, as its immediate con-

sequent ; and causation, power, or any other synonymous words which we may use, express nothing more than this permanent relation of that which has preceded to that which has followed.

That one event should invariably be followed by another event, is indeed, it will be allowed, as every thing in nature is, most wonderful, and can be ascribed only to the infinite source of every thing wonderful and sublime ; the will of that divine Being, who gave the universe its laws, and who formed these with a most beneficent arrangement for the happiness of his creatures, who, without a belief in the uniformity of these laws, to direct their conduct, could not have known how to preserve even their animal existence. But the uniformity of succession is surely not rendered less wonderful, by a mere change of name. It is the same unaltered wonder still when we ascribe the term *power* to the prior of two events, as when we ascribe to it the exactly synonymous phrase *invariableness of antecedence* ; each of these terms implying nothing more than that the one event cannot take place without being immediately followed by the other. The permanence and uniformity of the relation are the essential circumstances. To be that which cannot exist, without being instantly followed by a certain event, is to be the *cause* of the *event*, as a correlative *effect*. It is impossible for us to believe, that the invariable antecedent is any thing but the *cause*, or the *cause* any thing but the invariable antecedent ; as it is impossible for us to believe that *homo* is the Latin synonyme of *man*, and yet that *man* is not the English synonyme of *homo*.

To know the *powers* of nature, is, then, nothing more than to know what antecedents are and will be *invariably* followed by what consequents ; for this invariableness, and not any distinct existence, is all which the shorter term *power*, in any case, expresses ; and this, and this alone, is the true object of physical inquiry, in that second point of view, in which we have considered it, as directed to the successions of events.

Whenever, therefore, the question is put, as to any object, What is it ? there are two answers, and only two answers, that can be given with meaning. We may regard it as it exists in *space*, and state the elements that co-exist in it, or rather that constitute it ; or we may regard it as it exists in *time*, and state, in all the series of changes, of which it forms an invariable part, the objects to which it is related as antecedent or consequent.

To combine these two views of nature, as it exists in space and time, and to know, with perfect accuracy, every element of every

aggregate, and every series of changes, of which each forms, or can form, a part, would be to know every thing which can be physically known of the universe. To extend our mere physical inquiry still farther into the phenomena of nature, after this perfect knowledge, would be to suppose erroneously, that, in the compounds before us, of which we know every element, there is some element, not yet discovered, or in the well known successions of events, some antecedent or consequent as yet unobserved ; or it would be to inquire without any real object of inquiry,—a sort of investigation, which, for two thousand years, was almost the sole employment of the subtle and the studious, and which is far from having perished, with those venerable follies of the schools, at which we know so well how to smile, even while we are imitating them, perhaps, with similar errors of our own.

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## CHAPTER IV.

### OF POWER, CAUSE, AND EFFECT.

POWER is not any thing that can exist separately from a substance, but is merely the substance itself, considered in relation to another substance,—in the same manner as what we denominate *form*, is not any thing separate from the elementary atoms of a mass, but is merely the relation of a number of atoms, as co-existing in apparent contact. The sculptor at every stroke of his chisel, alters the form of the block of marble on which he works, not by communicating to it any new qualities, but merely by separating from it a number of the corpuscles, which were formerly included by us in our conception of the continuous whole ; and when he has given the last delicate touches that finish the Jupiter, or the Venus, or Apollo, the divine form which we admire, as if it had assumed a new existence beneath the artist's hand, is still in itself unaltered,—the same quiescent mass, that slumbered for ages in the quarry of which it was a part.

The *form* of bodies is the relation of their elements to each other in *space*,—the *power* of bodies is their relation to each other in *time* ; and both form and power, if considered separately from the number of elementary corpuscles, and from the changes that arise successively, are equally abstractions of the mind, and nothing more. In the philosophy of Aristotle, *form*, when considered separately from the figured

substance, was regarded as something equally real with matter itself; and indeed, *matter*, which was supposed to derive from *form* all its qualities, was rather the less important of the two. Of *substantial forms*, however, long so omnipotent, we now hear, only in those works which record the errors of other ages, as a part of the history of the fallible being, man.

The vague and obscure notions, at present attached to the words *power*, *cause*, *effect*, appear very analogous to the notions of the ancient philosophers, with respect to form; and, I trust that as we have now universally learned to consider *form*, as nothing in itself, but only as the relation of bodies co-existing immediately in *space*, so *power* will at length be as universally considered as only the relation which substances bear to each other in *time*, according as their phenomena are immediately successive; the invariable antecedent being the cause, the invariable consequent the effect; and the antecedent and consequent being all that are present in any phenomenon. There are, in nature, only substances; and all the substances in nature, are every thing that truly exists in nature. There is, therefore, no additional power, separate, or different from the antecedent itself, more than there is form, separate or different from the figured mass, or any other quality without a substance. In the beautiful experiment of the prismatic decomposition of light, for example, the refracting power of the prism is not any thing separate or separable from it, more than its weight or transparency of colour. There are not a prism and transparency, but there is a prism giving passage to light. In like manner, there are not a prism, and refracting power, and coloured rays, but there are a prism and rays of various colours, which we have perceived to be deflected variously from their original line of direction, when they approach and quit the lens, and which we believe, will, in the same circumstances, continually exhibit the same tendency.

It is the mere regularity of the successions of events, not any additional and more mysterious circumstance, which power may be supposed to denote, that gives the whole value to our physical knowledge. It is of importance for us to know, *what* antecedents truly precede *what* consequents; since we can thus provide for that future, which we are hence enabled to foresee, and can, in a great measure, modify, and almost create, the future to ourselves, by arranging the objects over which we have command, in such a manner as to form with them the antecedents, which we know to be invariably followed by the consequents desired by us. It is thus we are able to exercise

that command over nature, which He, who is its only real Sovereign, has designed, in the magnificence of His bounty, to confer on us, together with the still greater privilege of knowing that Omnipotence to which all our delegated empire is so humbly subordinate.

Such is the simple, and, as it appears to me, the only intelligible view of *power*, as discoverable in the successive phenomena of nature. And yet, how different from this simple view is the common, or, I may almost say, the universal notion of the agencies, which are supposed to be concerned in the phenomena that are the objects of philosophic inquiry. It is the detection of the powers of nature, to which such inquiry is supposed to lead,—but not of powers, in the sense in which alone that phrase is intelligible, as signifying the objects themselves which uniformly precede certain changes. The powers which our investigation is to detect, or which, at least, in all the phenomena that come under our observation, we are to consider as the sole efficient, though invisible producers of them, are conceived by us to be something far more mysterious,—something that is no part of the antecedent, and yet is a part of it,—or that intervenes between each antecedent and consequent, without being itself any thing intermediate ; —as if it were possible that any thing could intervene in a series, without instantly becoming itself a part of the series,—a new link in the lengthened chain,—the consequent of the former antecedent, and the antecedent of the former consequent.

To me, indeed, it appears so very obvious a truth, that the substances which exist in nature,—the world, its living inhabitants, and the adorable Being who created them,—are all the real existences in nature, and that, in the various changes which occur, therefore, there can as little be any powers or susceptibilities different from the antecedents and consequents themselves, as there can be forms different from the co-existing particles which constitute them,—that to labour thus to impress this truth, seems to me almost like an attempt to demonstrate a self-evident proposition. An illusion, however, so universal, as that which supposes the powers of nature, to be something more, than the mere series of antecedents themselves, is not rashly, or without very full inquiry, to be considered as an illusion ; and, at any rate, in the case of a mistake, so prevalent and so important in its consequences, it cannot be uninteresting, to inquire into the circumstances, that appear most probably to have led to it.

One source of the general fallacy unquestionably is the influence of *abstraction*, aided, and in a great measure perpetuated, by the use of

language, and the common unavoidable modes of grammatical construction. We speak of the powers of a substance, of substances that have certain powers,—of the figure of a body, or of bodies that have a certain figure, in the same manner as we speak of the students of a university, or of a house that has a great number of lodgers; and we thus learn to consider the power, which a substance possesses, as something different from the substance itself, inherent in it indeed, but inherent as something that may yet subsist separately. In the ancient philosophy, this error extended to the notions both of form and power. In the case of form, however, the illusion, though it lasted for many ages, did at length cease, and no one now regards the figure of a body as any thing but the body itself. It is probable that the illusion, with respect to power, as something different from the substance that is said to possess it, would, in like manner, have ceased, and given place to juster views, if it had not been for the cause, which I am next to consider.

This cause is the imperfection of our senses. They are too imperfect, to enable us to distinguish all the elements, that co-exist in bodies, and of elements which are themselves unknown to us, the minute changes which take place in them, must of course be unknown. We are hence, from our incapacity of discovering these elements by our imperfect senses and imperfect analysis, incapable of distinguishing the whole series of external changes that occur in them,—the whole progressive series of antecedents and consequents in a phenomenon that appears to our senses simple; and, since it is only between immediate antecedents and consequents, that we suppose any permanent and invariable relation, we are therefore constantly on the watch, to detect, in the more obvious changes that appear to us in nature, some of those minuter elementary changes, which we suspect to intervene. These minute invisible changes, when actually intervening, are truly what connect the obvious antecedents with the obvious consequents; and the innumerable discoveries, which we are constantly making of these, lead us habitually to suppose, that amid all the visible changes perceived by us, there is something latent which links them together. He who for the first time listens to the delightful sounds of a violin, if he be ignorant of the theory of sound, will very naturally suppose that the touch of the strings by the bow is the cause of the melody which he hears. He learns, however, that this primary impulse would be of little effect, were it not for the vibrations excited by it in the violin itself; and another discovery, still more important, shows him that the



vibration of the instrument would be of no effect, if it were not for the elastic medium, interposed between his ear and it. It is no longer to the violin, therefore, that he looks, as the direct cause of the sensation of sound, but to the vibrating air; nor will even this be long considered by him as the cause, if he turns his attention to the structure of the organ of hearing. He will trace effect after effect, through a long series of complex and very wonderful parts, till he arrive at the auditory nerve, and the whole mass of the brain,—in some unknown state of which he is at length forced to rest, as the cause or immediate antecedent, of that affection of the mind, which constitutes the particular sensation. To inquire into the latent causes of events is thus to endeavour to observe changes which we suppose to be actually taking place before us unobserved, very nearly in the same manner, as to inquire into the composition of a substance is to strive to discover the bodies that are constantly before us, without our being able to distinguish them.

It is quite impossible, that this constant search, and frequent detection of causes, before unknown, thus found to intervene between all the phenomena observed by us, should not, by the influence of the common principles of our mental constitution, at length associate, almost indissolubly, with the very notion of changes as perceived by us, the notion of something intermediate, that as yet lies hid from our search, and connects the parts of the series which we at present perceive. This latent something, supposed to intervene between the observed antecedent and the observed consequent, being the more immediate antecedent of the change which we observe, is of course regarded by us as the true cause of the change, while the antecedent actually observed by us, and known, ceases, for the same reason, to be regarded as the cause, and a cause is hence supposed by us to be something very mysterious; since we give the name, in our imagination, to something, of the nature of which we must be absolutely ignorant, as we are, by supposition, ignorant of its very existence.

The notion which we form of power is the same, whether it be that of created beings, or of the Creator himself. The power of God is not any thing different from God; but is the Almighty himself, willing whatever seems to him good, and creating or altering all things by his very will to create or alter. When we analyze those great, but obscure ideas which rise in our mind, while we attempt to think of the creation of things, we feel, that it is still only a sequence of events which we are considering,—though of events, the magnitude of which

allows us no comparison, because it has nothing in common with those earthly changes which fall beneath our view. We do not see any third circumstance existing intermediately, and binding, as it were, the will of the Omnipotent Creator to the things which are to be ; we conceive only the Divine will itself, as if made visible to our imagination, and all nature at the very moment rising around. It is evident, that in the case of the divine agency, as well as in every other instance of causation, the introduction of any circumstance, as a bond of closer connexion, would only furnish a new phenomenon to be itself connected ; but even though it were possible to conceive the closer connexion of such a third circumstance, as is supposed to constitute the inexplicable efficiency between the will of the Creator and the rise of the universe, it would diminish, indeed, but it certainly cannot be supposed to elevate, the majesty of the person, and of the scene. Our feeling of his omnipotence is not rendered stronger by the elevation of the complicated process ; it is, on the contrary, the immediate succession of the object to the desire, which impresses the force of the omnipotence on our mind ; and it is to the divine agency, therefore, that the representation of instant sequence seems peculiarly suited, as if it were more emphatically powerful. Such is the great charm of the celebrated passage of Genesis, descriptive of the creation of light. It is from stating nothing more than the antecedent and consequent, that the majestic simplicity of the description is derived. God speaks, and it is done. We imagine nothing intermediate. In our highest contemplation of His power, we believe only, that, when He willed creation, a world arose ; and that, in all future time, His will to create cannot exist, without being followed by the instant rise into being of whatever He may have willed ; that His will to destroy any thing, will be, in like manner, followed by its non-existence ; and His will to vary the course of things, by miraculous appearances. The will is the only necessary previous change ; and that Being has almighty power, whose every will is immediately and invariably followed by the existence of its object.

## CHAPTER V.

## OF HYPOTHESIS AND THEORY.

The same imperfection of our senses, which, from our incapacity of discovering all the minute elements, and consequently all the minute elementary changes, in bodies, leads us to form erroneous notions of power and causation, has tended, in like manner, to produce a fondness for *hypotheses*, which, without rendering the observed phenomena, in any respect, more intelligible, only render them more complicated, and increase the very difficulty, which they are supposed to diminish.

If we suppose the intervention of some unknown cause, in every phenomenon which we perceive, we must be equally desirous of discovering that unknown cause, which we suppose to be intermediate ; and, when this is not easily discoverable, we must feel a strong tendency to divine what it is, and to acquiesce, more readily than we should otherwise have done, in the certainty of what we have only imagined, —always, of course, imagining the cause, which seems to have most analogy to the observed effect.

Such is the nature of that illusion, from which the love of hypotheses flows,—as seeming, by the intervention of a new antecedent, to render more intelligible the sequences of events that are obviously before us ;—though all which is truly done, is to double the number of antecedents, and, therefore, to double, instead of removing the difficulty, that is supposed to be involved in the consideration of a simple sequence of events. A stone tends to the ground ; that it should have this tendency, in consequence of the mere presence of the earth, appears to us most wonderful ; and we think, that it would be much less wonderful, if we could discover the presence, though it were the mere presence, of something else. We therefore, in our mind, run over every circumstance analogous, to discover something which we may consider as present, that may represent to our imagination the cause which we seek. The effect of impulse, in producing motion, we know by constant experience ; and, as the motion, which it produces, in a particular direction, seems analogous to the motion of the stone, in its particular direction, we conceive, that the motion of a stone, in its fall to the earth, is rendered more intelligible, by the imagined intervention of some impelling body. The circumstances, which we observe, however, are manifestly inconsistent with the supposition of the impulse of any very

gross matter. The analogies of gross matter are accordingly excluded from our thoughts, and we suppose the impulse to proceed from some very subtle fluid to which we give the name of *ether*, or any other name, which we may choose to invent for it. The hypothesis is founded, manifestly, on the mere analogy of another species of motion, and which would account for gravitation by the impulse of some fine fluid. It is evident, that there may be, in this way, as many hypotheses to explain a single fact, as there have been circumstances analogous observed in all the various phenomena of nature. Accordingly, another set of philosophers, instead of explaining gravitation by the analogy of impulse, have had recourse to another analogy, still more intimately familiar to us,—that of the phenomena of life. We are able to move our limbs by our mere volition. The mind, therefore, it is evident, can produce motion in matter; and it is hence some interposed spiritual agent, which produces all the phenomena of gravitation. Every orb, in its revolution on its axis, or in its great journey through the heavens, has, according to this system of philosophical mythology, some peculiar genius, or directing spirit, that regulates its course, in the same manner as, of old, the universe itself was considered as one enormous animal, performing its various movements by its own vital energies. It is the influence of this analogy of our own muscular motions, as obedient to our volition,—together with the mistaken belief of adding greater honour to the divine Omnipotent,—which has led a very large class of philosophers to ascribe every change in the universe, material or intellectual, not to the original foresight and arrangement merely,—the irresistible evidence of which even the impiety, that professes to question it, must secretly admit,—but to the direct operation of the Creator and Sovereign of the world.

The production of muscular motion by the will, has itself given occasion to innumerable speculations of this kind. The nerves, distributing to the different muscles, are evidently instrumental to their contraction; since the destruction of the nerve puts an end to the voluntary contraction of the muscle, and consequently to the apparent motion of the limb. But what is the influence that is propagated along the nerve, and in what manner is it propagated? For explaining this most familiar of all phenomena, there is scarcely any class of phenomena in nature, to the analogy of which recourse has not been had,—the vibration of musical chords,—the coiling or uncoiling of springs,—the motion of elastic fluids,—magnetism, electricity, galvanism; and the result of so many hypotheses,—after all the labour of striving to adapt them to the phenomena, and the still greater labour of striving to prove them ex-

actly adapted, when they were far from being so,—has been the return to the simple fact, that muscular motion follows a certain state of the nerve;—in the same manner, as the result of all the similar labour, that has been employed to account, as it has been termed, for gravitation, has been a return to the simple fact, that, at all visible distances observed, the bodies in nature tend toward each other.

That *hypotheses*, in that wide sense of the word which implies every thing conjectural, are without use in philosophy, it would be absurd to affirm, since every inquiry may, in that wide sense, be said to presuppose them, and must always presuppose them if the inquiry have any object. They are of use, however, not as superseding investigation, but as directing investigation to certain objects,—not as telling us what we are to believe, but as pointing out to us what we are to endeavour to ascertain. An hypothesis, in this view of it, is nothing more than a reason for making one experiment or observation rather than another; and it is evident, that without some reason of this kind, as experiments and observations are almost infinite, inquiry would be altogether profitless. To make experiments at random, is not to philosophize; it becomes philosophy, only when the experiments are made with a certain view; and to make them with any particular view, is to suppose the presence of something, the operation of which they will tend either to prove or disprove. When Torricelli, for example, proceeding on the observation previously made, by Galileo, with respect to the limited height to which water could be made to rise in a pump,—that memorable observation, which demonstrated, at last, after so many ages of errors, what ought not for a single moment to have required to be demonstrated, the absurdity of the horror of a void ascribed to nature,—when, proceeding on this memorable observation, Torricelli made his equally memorable experiment with respect to the height of the column of mercury supported in an inverted tube, and found, on comparison of their specific gravities, the columns of mercury and water to be exactly equiponderant, it is evident that he was led to the experiment with the mercury by the supposition, that the rise of fluids *in vacuo* was occasioned by some counterpressure, exactly equal to the weight supported, and that the column of mercury, therefore, should be less in height than the column of water, in the exact inverse ratio of their specific gravities, by which the counterpressure was to be sustained. To conceive the air, which was then universally regarded as essentially light, to be not light but heavy, so as to press on the fluid beneath, was at that time, to make as bold a supposition as could be made. It was indeed, a temporary hypothesis,

even when it led to that experimental demonstration of the fact, which proved it forever after not to be hypothetical.

An hypothesis, then, in the first stage of inquiry, far from being inconsistent with sound philosophy, may be said to be essential to it. But it is essential only in this first stage, as suggesting what is afterwards to be verified or disproved ; and, when the experiments or observations to which it directs us do not verify it, it is no longer to be entertained, even as an hypothesis.

What is commonly termed *theory*, in opposition to *hypothesis*, is far from being so different from it as is commonly represented,—at least, in the very wide application which is usually made of it. We are told, by those who lay down rules of philosophizing, that the object of philosophy is, to observe particulars, and, from these, to frame general laws, which may, again, be applied to the explanation of particulars ; and the view which is thus given of the real province of philosophy is undoubtedly a just one ;—but there is an ambiguity in the language which is deceptive, and with respect to which, caution must be observed. If, by the term *general law*, be meant the agreement in some common circumstances of a number of events observed, there can be no question that we proceed safely in framing it, and that what we have already found in a number of events, must be applicable to that number of events ; in the same manner, as, after combining in the term *animal* the circumstances in which a dog, a horse, a sheep agree, we cannot err in applying the term *animal* to a dog, a horse, a sheep. But the only particulars, to which, in this case, we can, with perfect confidence, apply a general law, are the very particulars that have been before observed by us. If it be understood as more general than the circumstances observed, and therefore capable of being applied with perfect certainty to the explanation of new phenomena, we evidently, to the extent in which the general law is applied beyond the circumstances observed, proceed on mere supposition, as truly as in any hypothesis which we could have framed ; and though the supposition may be more and more certain, in proportion to the number of cases thus generalized, and the absence of any circumstance, which can be supposed, in the new case, to be inconsistent with it, it never can amount to actual certainty. Let us take, for example, one of the most striking cases of this sort. That bodies tend to each other, in all circumstances, with a force increasing directly as their quantities, and inversely as the squares of their distances, may seem in the highest degree probable indeed, from the innumerable facts observed on our globe, and in the magnificent extent of the planetary move-

ments ; but it cannot be said to be certain at all distances, in which we have never had an opportunity of making observations,—as it seems to be verified in the heights of our atmosphere and in the distances of the planets, in their orbits, from the sun and from each other. It is not necessary, however to refer, for possible exceptions, to spaces that are beyond our observation ; since, on the surface of our own earth, there is abundant evidence, that the law does not hold universally. Every quiescent mass that is capable of greater compression, and of which the particles, therefore, before that compression, are not in absolute contact, shows sufficiently, that the principle of attraction, which, of itself, would have brought them into actual contact, must have ceased to operate, while there was still a space between the particles that would have allowed its free operation ; and, in the phenomena of elasticity, and impulse in general, it has not merely ceased, but is actually reversed,—the bodies which, at all visible distances, exhibited a reciprocal attraction, now exhibiting a reciprocal repulsion, in consequence of which they mutually fly off, as readily as they before approached,—that is to say, the tendency of bodies to each other being converted into a tendency from each other by a mere change of distance, so slight as to be almost inappreciable. When a ball rebounds from the earth, toward which it moved rapidly before, and the gravitating tendency is thus evidently reversed without the intervention of any foreign force, what eye, though it be aided by all the nicest apparatus of optical art, can discover the lines which separate those infinitesimal differences of proximity, at which the particles of the ball still continue to gravitate towards the earth, and are afterwards driven from it in an opposite direction ;—yet the phenomenon itself is a sufficient proof, that in these spaces, which seem, to our organs of sense, so completely the same that it is absolutely impossible for us to distinguish them, the reciprocal tendencies of the particles of the ball and of the earth are as truly opposite, as if the laws of gravitation had, at the moment at which the rebound begins, been reversed through the whole system of the universe.

There is no theory, which, if applied to the explanation of *new* phenomena, is not, to a certain degree, conjectural ; because it must proceed on the supposition, that what was true in certain circumstances, is true also in circumstances that have not been observed. It admits of certainty, only when it is applied to the very substances observed,—in the very circumstances observed,—in which case it may be strictly said to be nothing more than the application of a general term to the particulars, which we have before agreed to comprehend in it. Whatever

is more than this is truly hypothetical,—the difference being, that we commonly give the name of *hypothesis* to cases, in which we suppose the intervention of some substance, of the existence of which, as present in the phenomenon, we have no direct proof, or of some additional quality of a substance before unobserved,—and the name of *theory* to cases, which do not suppose the existence of any substance, that is not actually observed, or of any quality that has not been actually observed, but merely the continuance, in certain new circumstances, of tendencies observed in other circumstances. Thus, if a planet were discovered revolving in the space which separates the orbits of any two planets at present known, were we to suppose of matter, in this new situation, that it would be subject to the same exact law of gravitation, to which the other planets were known to be subject, and to predict its place in the heavens, at any time, according to this law, we should be said to form a theory of its motions; as we should not take for granted any new quality of a substance, or the existence of any substance, which was not evidently present, but only of tendencies observed before in other circumstances,—analogous indeed, but not absolutely the same. We should be said to form an hypothesis on the subject, if, making the same prediction, as to its motions, and place in the heavens, at any given time, we were to ascribe the centripetal tendency, which confines it within its orbit, to the impulse of ether, or to any other mechanical cause. The terms, however, are used very loosely, not in conversation merely, but in the writings of philosophers,—an hypothesis often meaning nothing more than a theory, to which we have not given our assent,—and a theory an hypothesis which we have adopted, or still more, one which we have formed ourselves.

A *theory*, then, even in that best sense, to which I wish it accurately confined, as often as it ventures a single hair-breadth beyond the line of former observation, may be wrong, as an hypothesis may be wrong. But, in a theory, in this sense of it, there are both less risk of error and less extensive evil from error, than in an hypothesis. There is less risk of error, because we speak only of the properties of bodies, that must be allowed actually to exist; and the evil of error is, for the same reason, less extensive, since it must be confined to this single point; whereas, if we were to imagine falsely the presence of some third substance, our supposition might involve as many errors, as that substance has qualities; since we should be led to suppose, and expect, some or all of the other consequences, which usually attend it, when really present.



The practical conclusion to be drawn from this discussion, is, that we should use hypotheses to suggest and direct inquiry, not to terminate or supersede it; and that in theorizing,—as the chance of error, in the application of a general law, diminishes, in proportion to the number of analogous cases, in which it is observed to hold,—we should not form any general proposition, till after as wide an induction, as it is possible for us to make; and, in the subsequent application of it to particulars, should never content ourselves, in any new circumstances, with the mere probability, however high, which this application of it affords; while it is possible for us to verify, or disprove it, by actual experiment.

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## CHAPTER VI.

### APPLICATION OF THE LAWS OF PHYSICAL INQUIRY TO THE STUDY OF MIND.

THE laws which regulate our inquiry into the internal world of thought are, in every respect, similar to those which regulate our inquiry into the external world. The same great objects are to be had in view, and no other,—the analysis of what is complex, and the observation and arrangement of the sequences of phenomena, as respectively antecedent and consequent.

In this respect, also, the philosophy of matter and the philosophy of mind completely agree—that, in both equally, our knowledge is confined to the phenomena which they exhibit. We give the name of *matter* to the unknown cause of various feelings, which by the constitution of our nature, it is impossible for us not to refer to something external as their cause. What it is, independent of our perception, we know not; but as the subject of our perception, we regard it as that which is extended, and consequently divisible, impenetrable, mobile; and these qualities, or whatever other qualities we may think necessary to include for expressing the particular substances that affect our senses variously, constitute our whole definition of matter, because, in truth, they constitute our whole knowledge of it. To suppose us to know what it is in itself, in absolute independence of our perception, would be manifestly absurd; since it is only by our perception,—that is to say, by the feelings of our mind,—that it can be known to us at all;

and these mere feelings of the mind must depend, at least as much on the laws of the mind affected, as on the laws of the substance that affects it. Whatever knowledge we may acquire of it, therefore, is relative only, and must be relative in all circumstances; though, instead of the few senses which connect us with it at present, we were endowed with as many senses as there are, perhaps, qualities of matter, the nature of which we are at present incapable of distinguishing;—the only effect of such increased number of senses being to render more qualities of matter known to us, not to make matter known to us in its very essence, as it exists without relation to mind.

If our knowledge of matter be relative only, our knowledge of mind is equally so. We know it only as susceptible of feelings that have already existed; and of its susceptibilities of feelings which have not arisen, but which may, in other circumstances, arise, we know as little, as the blind can be supposed to know of colours, or as we, with all our senses, know of the qualities which matter might exhibit to us, if our own organization were different. Of the *essence* of mind, then, we know nothing, but in relation to the states or feelings that form, or have formed, our momentary consciousness. Our knowledge is not absolute but relative; though the term *relative* seems to be applied, in an unusual manner, when, as in the present instance, the relative and correlative are the same. It is unquestionably the same individual mind, which, in intellectual investigation, is at once the object and the observer. But the noble endowment of memory, with which our Creator has blessed us, solves all the mystery of this singular paradox. In consequence of this one faculty, our mind, simple and indivisible as it truly is, is, as it were, multiplied and extended, expanding itself over that long series of sensations and emotions, in which it seems to live again, and to live with many lives. But for memory, there can be no question that the relation of thought to thought could not have been perceived; and that hence there could have been no philosophy whatever, intellectual or moral, physical or metaphysical. To this wonderful endowment, then, which gives us the past to compare with the present, we owe that most wonderful of relations, of which the same being is at once the object and the subject, contemplating itself, in the same manner as it casts its view on objects that are distant from it, comparing thought with thought, emotion with emotion, approving its own moral actions with the complacency with which it looks on the virtues of those whom it admires and loves in the most remote nation or age, or passing sentence on itself as if on a wretch whom it loathed, that

was trembling with conscious delinquency under the inquisition of a severe and all-knowing judge.

The past feelings of the mind, then, are, as it were, objects present to the mind itself, and acquire thus truly a sort of relative existence, which enables us to class the phenomena of our own spiritual being as we class the phenomena of the world without. The mind is that which we know to have been susceptible of all the variety of feelings which we remember ; and it is only as it is susceptible of all these varieties of feeling, that we can have any knowledge of it. We define it therefore, by stating its various susceptibilities, including more or fewer of these in our definition, as we may either have observed or remembered more or less, or generalized more or less what we have observed and remembered ; precisely as in our definition of matter, we include more or fewer qualities, according to the extent of our previous observation and arrangement.

To know *matter*, even relatively, as our limited senses allow us to know it, is to have knowledge which can scarcely be called limited. Nothing, indeed, can seem more narrow in extent, if we think only of the small number of our senses, by which alone the communication can be carried on. But what infinity of objects has nature presented to each ! In the mere forms and colours that strike our eyes, what splendid variety ! the proportion of all things that bloom or live, the earth, the ocean, the universe, and almost God himself appearing to our very senses, in the excellence and beauty of the works which He has made !

It is the same, with respect to the *mind*, though we know it only by its susceptibilities of affection, in the various feelings of our momentary consciousness, and cannot hope to know it, but as the permanent subject of all these separate consciousnesses ; to know thus relatively only, the affections even of one single substance, is to have a field of the most boundless and inexhaustible wonders ever present and open to our inquiry ! It may be said to comprehend every thing which we perceive, and remember, and imagine, and compare, and admire,—all those mysterious processes of thought, which, in the happy efforts of the philosopher and the poet, are concerned in the production of their noblest results, and which are not less deserving of our regard, as they are every moment exercised by all, in the humble intellectual functions of common life. In analyzing and arranging the mental phenomena, then, we consider phenomena, that are diversified, indeed, in individuals, but, as species, are still common to all ; for there is no power possessed by the most comprehensive intellect, which it does not share, in some pro-

portion, with the dullest and rudest of mankind. All men perceive, remember, reason,—all, to a certain degree at least, form their little theories, both physical and metaphysical, of the conduct of their fellow men, and of the passing events of nature ; and all, occasionally, enliven their social intercourse, or their solitary hours, with inventions of fancy, that last but for a moment indeed, and are not worthy of lasting longer, but which are products of the same species of intellectual energy, that gave existence to those glorious works, to which ages have listened with increasing reverence, and which, immortal as the spirits that produced them, are yet to command the veneration of every future age. When we see before us, in its finished magnificence, a temple, appropriated to the worship of the Supreme Being, and almost worthy of being filled with his presence, we scarcely think that it is erected according to the same simple principles, and formed of the same stone and mortar, as the plain dwellings around us, adapted to the hourly and humble uses of domestic life ; and by a similar illusion, when we consider the splendid works of intellectual art, we can scarcely bring ourselves to think, that genius is but a form of general tendencies of association, of which all partake ; and that its magnificent conceptions, therefore, rise according to the same simple laws which regulate the course of thought of the vulgar. In this universality of diffusion as general tendencies, that may be variously excited by varying circumstances, our intellectual powers are similar to those other principles of our nature,—our emotions, and whatever feelings more immediately connected with moral action have been usually distinguished by the name of our *active* powers. In the philosophy of both we consider, not a few distinguished individuals, as possessed of principles essentially distinct in kind, but the species *man*. They are to be found, wherever there is a human being ; and we do not infer with more certainty, when we perceive the impression of a foot upon the sand, that *man* has been there, than we expect to find in him, whatever may be his state of barbarism or civilization, some form of the common powers, and passions, which, though directed perhaps to different objects, we have felt and witnessed in the society around us.

The philosophy of mind then, and the philosophy of matter, agree in this respect, that our knowledge is, in both, confined to the mere phenomena. They agree, also, in the two species of inquiry which they admit. The phenomena of mind, in the same manner as we have seen in the case of matter, may be considered as *complex* and susceptible of analysis, or they may be considered as *successive* in a

certain order, and bearing, therefore, to each other the reciprocal relation of causes and effects.

That we can know the phenomena, only as far as we have attended to their sequences, and that, without experiment, therefore, it would have been impossible for us to predict any of their successions, is equally true in mind as in matter. Many of the successions, indeed, are so familiar to us, that it may appear at first, very difficult to conceive, that we should not have been able, at least with respect to them, to predict, originally, *what* antecedents would have been followed by *what* consequents. We may allow certainly, that we should not have been able to foresee the pleasure which we receive from the finer works of imitative art,—from the successions, or co-existences, in music, of sounds, that, considered separately, would scarcely be counted among the sources of delight,—from the charm of versification, that depends on circumstances so very slight, as to be altogether destroyed, and even converted into pain, by the change of quantity of a single syllable. But, that the remembrance of pleasure should not be attended with *desire* of enjoying it again, seems to us almost inconsistent with the very nature of the pleasing emotion. In like manner, we may allow, that we could not have predicted the sympathy which we may feel with the distresses of others, when they arise from causes that cannot affect *us*, and yet make, for the time, the agony, which we merely behold, a part of our own existence. But we can scarcely think, that we require any experience, to know, that the contemplation of pain, which we may ourselves have to endure, should be the cause of that painful feeling, to which we give the name of *fear*, or that the actual suffering should be accompanied with the desire of relief. The truth is, however, that, in these cases, and in all of them equally, it would have been impossible, but for experience, to predict the consequent of any of the antecedents. The pleasure which we feel in the contemplation of a work of art, the pain which we feel at the sight of the misery of others, are as much the natural effects of states of mind preceding them, as the fear of pain is the effect of the consideration of pain as hanging over us. Our various feelings, similar or dissimilar, kindred or discordant, are all mere states of the mind; and there is nothing, in any one state of the mind, considered in itself, which necessarily involves the succession of any other state of mind. That particular state, for example, which constitutes the mere feeling of pain, instead of being attended by that different state which constitutes the desire of being freed from pain, might have continued as

one uniform feeling, or might have ceased, and been succeeded by some other state, though in the original adaptation of our mental frames, by that Creator's wisdom which planned the sequences of its phenomena, the particular affection, which constitutes desire, had not been one of the innumerable varieties of affection, of which the mind was forever to be susceptible.

Since the phenomena of the mind, are obviously *successive*, like those of matter, the consideration of the sequences of the mental phenomena, and the arrangement of them in certain classes, must appear sufficiently analogous to the consideration and arrangement of the sequences of the phenomena of the material world. But that there should be any inquiries, in the philosophy of mind, corresponding with the inquiries into the composition of bodies, may appear improbable, or almost absurd ; since the mind, and consequently its *affections*,—which I use as a short general term for expressing all the variety of the modes in which it can be affected, and which, therefore, are only the mind itself as it exists in different states,—must be always simple and indivisible. Yet, wonderful, or even absurd, as it may seem, notwithstanding the absolute simplicity of the mind itself, and consequently of all its feelings or momentary states,—the Science of Mind is, in its most important respects, a source of analysis, or of a process virtually the same as analysis ; and it is only, as it is in this virtual sense analytical, that any discovery, at least that any important discovery, can be expected to be made in it.

It is, indeed, scarcely possible to advance, even a step, in intellectual physics, without the necessity of performing some sort of analysis, by which we reduce to simpler elements, some complex feeling that seems virtually to involve them. In the mind of man, all is in a state of constant and ever varying complexity, and a single sentiment may be the slow result of innumerable feelings. There is not a single pleasure, or pain, or thought, or emotion, that may not,—by the influence of that associating principle, which is afterwards to come under our consideration,—be so connected with other pleasures, or pains, or thoughts, or emotions, as to form with them, for ever after, an union the most intimate. The complex, or seemingly complex, phenomena of thought, which result from the constant operation of this principle of the mind, it is the labour of the intellectual inquirer to analyze, as it is the labour of the chemist to reduce the compound bodies on which he operates, however close and intimate their combination may be, to their constituent elements. The process and the instruments by which the analyses

are carried on, are, indeed, as different as matter is from mind,—cumbersome as matter, in the one case,—in the other, simple and spiritual as mind itself. The aggregates of matter we analyze by the use of other matter, adding substance after substance, and varying manipulation after manipulation ;—the complex mental phenomena we analyze virtually by mere reflection ; the same individual mind being the subject of analysis, the instrument of analysis, and the analyzing inquirer.

When I speak, however, of the union of separate thoughts and feelings in one complex sentiment or emotion, and of the analytic power of reflection or reason, it must not be conceived, that I use these words in a sense precisely the same as when they are applied to matter. A mass of matter, as we have seen, is, in truth, not one body merely, but a multitude of contiguous bodies ; all of which, at the time, may be considered as having a separate existence, and as placed together more by accidental apposition, than by any essential union ;—and analysis is nothing more than what its etymology denotes, a *loosening* of these from each other. In strictness of language, this composition and analysis cannot take place in mind. Even the most complex feeling is still only one feeling ; for we cannot divide the states or affections of our mind into separate self-existing fractions, as we can divide a compound mass of matter into masses, which are separate and self-existing,—nor distinguish half a joy or sorrow from a whole joy or sorrow. The conception of *gold*, and the conception of a *mountain*, may separately arise, and may be followed by the conception of a *golden mountain* ; which may be said to be a *compound* of the two, in the sense in which I use that word, to express merely, that what is thus termed compound or complex is the result of certain previous feelings, to which, as if existing together, it is felt to have the virtual relation of equality, or the relation which a whole bears to the parts that are comprehended in it. But the conception of a golden mountain is still as much one state or feeling of one simple mind, as either of the separate conceptions of gold and of a mountain which preceded it. In cases of this kind, indeed, it is the very nature of the resulting feeling to seem to us thus complex ; and we are led, by the very constitution of our mind itself, to consider what we term a complex idea, as equivalent to the separate ideas from which it results, or as comprehensive of them,—as being truly to our conception—though to our conception only—and, therefore, only virtually or relatively to us inquirers,—the same, as if it were composed of the separate feelings co-existing, as the elements of a body co-exist in space.

It is this feeling of the relation of certain states of mind to certain other states of mind, which solves the whole mystery of mental analysis, that seemed at first so inexplicable,—the virtual decomposition, in our thought, of what is by its very nature indivisible. The mind, indeed, it must be allowed, is absolutely simple in all its states; every separate state or affection of it must, therefore, be absolutely simple; but in certain cases, in which a feeling is the result of other feelings preceding it, it is its very nature to appear to involve the union of those preceding feelings; and to distinguish the separate sensations, or thoughts, or emotions, of which, on reflection, it thus seems to be comprehensive, is to perform an intellectual process, which, though not a real analysis, is an analysis at least relatively to our conception. It may still, indeed, be said with truth, that the different feelings,—the states or affections of mind which we term complex,—are absolutely simple and indivisible, as much as the feelings or affections of mind which we term simple. Of this there can be no doubt. But the complexity with which alone we are concerned is not absolute, but relative,—a seeming complexity, which is involved in the very feeling of relation of every sort. That we are thus impressed with certain feelings of relation of conceptions to conceptions, no one can doubt who knows, that all science has its origin in these very feelings; and equivalence, or equality, is one of those relations, which, from its very constitution, it would be as impossible for the mind, in certain circumstances, not to feel, as it would be impossible for it, in certain other circumstances, not to have those simple feelings which it compares. With perfect organs of vision, and in the full light of day, it is not possible for us to look on a tree, or a rock, without perceiving it; but it is not more possible for us to form a conception of two trees, without regarding this state of mind, simple though it truly is, when absolutely considered, as virtually involving, or as equal to, two of those separate feelings, which constituted the conception of a single tree.

On this mere feeling of virtual equivalence, is founded all the demonstration of those sciences, which claim the glory of being peculiarly demonstrative; our equations and proportions of abstract number and quantity involving continually this analytic valuation of notions, as reciprocally proportional. Our conception of an angle of forty-five degrees is one state or affection of mind,—one state of one simple indivisible substance;—such, too, is our conception of a right angle. Our notion of four or eight, is as much one affection of mind, as our notion of a simple unit. But in reflecting on the separate states of



mind which constitute these notions, we are impressed with certain relations which they seem to us reciprocally to bear, and we consider the angle of forty-five degrees as equal to half the angle of ninety degrees, and our notion of eight as involving or equal to two of four. If one state of mind, which constitutes the notion of a certain abstract number or quantity, had not been considered in this sort of virtual comprehensiveness, as bearing the relation of equality, or proportion, to other states of mind, which constitute other abstract notions of the same species, mathematics would not merely have lost their certainty, but there could not, in truth, have been any such science as mathematics.

The intellectual analysis, which appears to constitute so important a part of the science of mind, is nothing more than the successive development, in application to the various mental phenomena, of this feeling of *equivalence*, or *comprehensiveness*, which is not confined to the mathematical notions of number and quantity, but extends to every thought and feeling which we regard as complex, that is to say, to almost every thought and feeling of which the mind is susceptible. We compare virtue with virtue, talent with talent, not, indeed, with the same precision, but certainly in the same manner, and with the same feeling of proportion, as we compare intellectually one angle with another; and we ask what ideas are involved in our complex notions of religion and government, with as strong a feeling that a number of ideas are virtually involved or comprehended in them, as when we ask, how often the square of two is repeated in the cube of six.

Analysis, then, in the Science of Mind, is founded wholly on the feeling of relation which one state of mind seems to bear to other states of mind, as comprehensive of them; but, while this seeming complexity is felt, it is the same thing to our analysis, as if the complexity, instead of being virtual and relative only, were absolute and real. It may be objected to the application of the term *analysis* to the Science of Mind, that it is a term borrowed from matter, and conveying, as applied to the mind, a notion in some degree different from its etymological sense. But this is an objection which may be urged, with at least equal force, against every term, or almost every term, of our science. In our want of a peculiar metaphysical language, we are obliged in this, as in every other case, to borrow a metaphysical language from the material world; and we are very naturally led to speak of mental *composition* and *analysis*, since to the mind which feels the relation of equivalence or comprehensiveness, it is precisely

the same thing as if our ideas and emotions, that result from former ideas and emotions, and are felt by us as if involving these in one complex whole, could be actually divided into the separate elements which appear to us thus virtually or relatively to be comprehended in them.

It is from having neglected this branch of the physical investigation of the mind,—by far the more important of the two,—and having fixed their attention solely on the successions of its phenomena, that some philosophers have been led to disparage the science as fruitless of discovery, and even to deride the pretensions or the hopes of those who do not consider it as absolutely exhausted ;—I will not say now merely, in the present improved state of the science, but as not exhausted almost before philosophy began, in the rude consciousness of the rudest savage, who saw, and remembered, and compared, and hoped, and feared ; and must, therefore, it is said, have known what it is to see, and remember, and compare, and hope, and fear.

If the phenomena of the mind were to be regarded merely as successive,—which is one only of the two lights in which they may be physically viewed,—it might, indeed, be said, with a little more appearance of truth, that this mere succession must be as familiar to the unreflecting mind, as to the mind of the philosopher ; though, even in this limited sense, the remark is far from being accurate. But the phenomena have other relations, as well as those of succession,—relations which are not involved in the mere consciousness of the moment, but are discoverable by reflection only,—and to the knowledge of which, therefore, addition after addition may be made by every new generation of reflecting inquirers. From the very instant of its first existence, the mind is constantly exhibiting phenomena more and more complex,—sensations, thoughts, emotions, all mingling together, and almost every feeling modifying, in some greater or less degree, the feelings that succeed it ;—as, in chemistry, it often happens, that the qualities of the separate ingredients of a compound body are not recognizable by us, in the apparently different qualities of the compound itself,—so in the spontaneous chemistry of the mind, the compound sentiment, that results from the association of former feelings, has, in many cases, on first consideration, so little resemblance to these constituents of it, as formerly existing in their elementary state, that it requires the most attentive reflection to separate, and evolve distinctly to others, the assemblages which even a few years may have produced. Indeed, so complex are the mental phenomena, and so difficult of

analysis,—even in those most common cases, which may be said to be familiar to all,—that it is truly wonderful that the difficulty of this analysis, and the field of inquiry which this very difficulty opens, should not have occurred to the disparagers of intellectual discovery, and made them feel, that what they were not able to explain could not be so well known to all mankind as to be absolutely incapable of additional illustration. The savage, they will tell us, is conscious of what he feels in loving his country, as well as the sage ; but does he know as well, or can even the sage himself inform us with precision, what the various elementary feelings have been, that have successively modified, or rather, that have constituted this local attachment ? The peasant, indeed, may have the feeling of beauty, like the artist who produces it, or the speculative inquirer, who analyses this very complex emotion. But the mere emotion, which beauty produces, is not the knowledge of the simpler feelings that have composed or modified it ; and though the pleasure and admiration were to continue exactly the same, the peasant would surely have learned something, if he could be made to understand, that beauty was more than the form and colour which his eye perceived. What is thus true of beauty as differently understood by the peasant and the philosopher, is true, in like manner, of all the other complex mental phenomena. It would, indeed, be as reasonable to affirm, that, because we all move our limbs, we are all equally acquainted with the physiology of muscular motion ; or, to take a case still more exactly appropriate, that we know all the sublimest truths of arithmetic and geometry, because we know all the numbers and figures of the mere relations of which these are the science,—as that we are all acquainted with the physiology of the mind, and the number of elements which enter into our various feelings, because we all perceive, and remember, and love, and hate. It is, it will be allowed, chiefly, or perhaps, wholly, as it is analytical, that the science of mind admits of discovery ; but, as a science of analysis, in which new relations are continually felt on reflection, it presents us with a field of discovery as rich, and, I may say, almost as inexhaustible in wonders, as that of the universe without.

After these remarks on physical inquiry in general, and its particular application to our own science, we shall now proceed to observe, and analyze, and arrange the mental phenomena, with clearer views, both of the materials on which we have to operate, and of the nature of the operations which we have to perform. We may consider the mind as now lying open before us, presenting to us all its phenomena, but pre-

senting them in *assemblages*, which it is to be our labour to separate and arrange.

Mind, then, is capable of existing in various states ; an enumeration of the leading classes of which, is all that constitutes our definition of it. It is that, we say, which perceives, remembers, compares, grieves, rejoices, loves, hates ; and though the terms, whatever they may be, that are used by us in any such enumeration, may be few, we must not forget that the terms are mere inventions of our own for the purpose of classification, and that each of them comprehends a variety of feelings, that are as truly different from each other, as the classes themselves are different. *Perception* is but a single word ; yet, when we consider the number of objects that may act upon our organs of sense, and the number of ways in which their action may be combined, so as to produce one compound effect, different from that which the same objects would produce separately, or in other forms of combination, how many are the feelings which this single word denotes !—so many, indeed, that no arithmetical computation is sufficient to measure their infinity.

Amid all this variety of feelings, with whatever rapidity the changes may succeed each other, and however opposite they may seem, we have still the most undoubting belief, that it is the same individual mind, which is thus affected in various ways. The pleasure which is felt at one moment, has indeed little apparent relation to the pain that was perhaps felt a few moments before ; and the knowledge of a subject, which we possess after having reflected on it fully, has equally little resemblance to our state of doubt when we began to inquire, or the total ignorance and indifference which preceded the first doubt that we felt. It is the same individual mind, however, which, in all these instances, is pleased and pained, is ignorant, doubts, reflects, knows. There is something “changed in all, and yet in all the same,” which at once constitutes the thoughts and emotions of the hour, and yet outlives them,—something, which, from the temporary agitations of passion, rises unaltered and everlasting, like the pyramid, that lifts still the same point to heaven, amid the sands and whirlwinds of the desert.

The consideration of the mind, as one substance, capable of existing in a variety of states, according as it is variously affected, and constituting, in these different states, all the complex phenomena of thought and feeling, necessarily involves the consideration of *consciousness* and of *personal identity*.

## CHAPTER VII.

## OF CONSCIOUSNESS.

IN the systems of philosophy, which have been most generally prevalent, especially in this part of the Island, consciousness has always been classed as one of the intellectual powers of the mind, differing from its other powers, as these mutually differ from each other. It is accordingly ranked by Dr Reid, as separate and distinct, in his Catalogue of the Intellectual Powers; and he says of it, that "it is an operation of the understanding of its own kind, and cannot be logically defined. The objects of it are our present pains, our pleasures, our hopes, our fears, our desires, our doubts, our thoughts of every kind,—in a word, all the passions, and all the actions and operations of our own minds, while they are present." And in various parts of his works, which it would be needless to quote, he alludes to its radical difference from the other powers of the mind, as if it were a point on which there could be no question. To me, however, it appears that this attempt to double, as it were, our various feelings, by making them not to constitute our consciousness, but to be the objects of it, as of a distinct intellectual power, is not a faithful statement of the phenomena of the mind, but is founded, partly on a confusion of thought, and still more on a confusion of language. Sensation is not the object of consciousness different from itself, but a particular sensation is the consciousness of a moment; as a particular hope, or fear, or grief, or resentment, or simple remembrance, may be the actual consciousness of the next moment. In short, if the mind of man, and all the changes which take place in it, from the first feeling with which life commenced, to the last with which it closes, could be made visible to any other thinking being, a certain series of feelings alone, that is to say, a certain number of successive states of the mind, would be distinguishable in it, forming, indeed, a variety of sensations, and thoughts, and passions, as momentary states of the mind, but all of them existing individually, and successively to each other. To suppose the mind to exist in two different states, in the same moment, is a manifest absurdity. To the whole series of states of the mind, then, whatever the individual momentary successive states may be, I give the name of our *consciousness*,—using that term, not to express any new state additional to the whole series, but merely to denote the wide variety of our feelings; in the same manner, as I use any other generic word, for

expressing briefly the individual varieties comprehended under it. There are not sensations, thoughts, passions, and also *consciousness*, any more than there is *quadruped* or *animal*, as a separate being, to be added to the wolves, tigers, elephants, and other living creatures, which I include under those terms.

The fallacy of conceiving consciousness to be something different from the feeling which is said to be its object, has arisen, in a great measure, from the use of the personal pronoun *I*, which the conviction of our identity, during the various feelings, or temporary consciousnesses of different moments, has led us to employ, as significant of our permanent self, of that being, which is conscious, and variously conscious, and which continues, after these feelings have ceased, to be the subject of other consciousness, as transient as the former. 'I am conscious of a certain feeling,' really means, however, no more than this,—'I feel in a certain manner,' or, in other words, 'My mind exists in that state which constitutes a certain feeling;' the mere existence of that feeling, and not any additional and distinguishable feeling that is to be termed *consciousness*, being all which is essential to the state of my mind, at the particular moment of sensation; for a pleasure or pain, of which we are not conscious, is a pleasure or pain, that, in reference to us at least, has no existence. But when we say, 'I am conscious' of a particular feeling, in the usual phraseology of our language, which has no mode of expressing, in a single word, the mere existence of a feeling, we are apt, from a prejudice of grammar, to separate the sentient *I* and the *feeling* as so radically different, as to justify our classing the feeling, in the relation of an object to that sentient principle which we call *I*.

To estimate more accurately the effect, which this reference to self produces, let us imagine a human being to be born with his faculties perfect as in mature life, and let us suppose a sensation to arise for the first time in his mind. For the sake of greater simplicity, let us suppose the sensation to be of a kind as little complex as possible; such, for example, as that which the fragrance of a rose excites. If, immediately after this first sensation, we imagine the sentient principle to be extinguished, what are we to call that feeling, which filled and constituted the brief moment of life? It was a simple sensation, and nothing more; and if only we say, that the sensation has existed,—whether we say, or do not say, that the mind is conscious of the sensation,—we shall convey precisely the same meaning; the consciousness of the sensation being, in that case, only a tautological expression of the

sensation itself. There will be, in this first momentary state, no separation of *self* and the *sensation*,—no little proposition formed in the mind, ‘I feel,’ or ‘I am conscious of a feeling;’ but the *feeling* and the *sentient I*, will, for the moment, be the same. It is this simple feeling, and this alone, which is the whole consciousness of the first moment; and no reference can be made of this to a *self*, which is independent of the temporary *consciousness*; because the knowledge of *self*, as distinct from the particular feeling, implies the remembrance of former feelings,—of feelings, which, together with the present, we ascribe to *one* thinking principle,—recognising the *principle*, the *self*, the *one*, as the *same*, amid all its transient diversities of consciousness.

Let us now, then, instead of supposing life, as in the former case, to be extinguished immediately after the first sensation, suppose another sensation to be excited, as, for instance, that which is produced by the sound of a flute. The mind either will be completely absorbed in this new sensation, without any subsequent remembrance,—in which case the consciousness of the sensation, as in the case of the fragrance that preceded it, will be only another more paraphrastic expression of the simple sensation,—or the remembrance of the former feeling will arise. If the remembrance of the former feeling arise, and the two different feelings be considered by the mind at once, it will now, by that irresistible law of our nature which impresses us with the conviction of our identity, conceive the two sensations, which it recognises as different in themselves, to have yet belonged to the same being,—that being, to which, when it has the use of language, it gives the name of *self*, and in relation to which it speaks, as often as it uses the pronoun *I*. The notion of *self*, as the lasting subject of successive transient feelings, being now, and not till now, acquired, through the remembrance of former sensations or temporary diversities of consciousness, the mind will often again, when other new sensations may have arisen, go through a similar process, being not merely affected with the particular momentary sensation, but remembering other prior feelings, and identifying it with them, in the general designation of *self*. In these circumstances the memory of the past will often mingle with and modify the present; and now indeed, to form the verbal proposition, ‘I am conscious of a particular sensation,’—since the very word *I* implies that this remembrance and identification has taken place,—may be allowed to express something more than the mere existence of the momentary sensation; for it expresses also that the mind, which now exists in the state of this particular sensation, has formerly existed in a

different state. There is a remembrance of former feelings, and a belief that the present and the past have been states of one substance. But this belief, or in other words, this remembrance of former feelings, is so far from being essential to every thought or sensation, that innumerable feelings every moment arise, without any such identification with the past. They are *felt*, however, for this is necessarily implied in their existence; but they exist, as transient thoughts or sensations only, and the consciousness, which we have of them, in these circumstances, is nothing more, than the thoughts or sensations themselves, which could not be thoughts or sensations if they were not felt.

In the greater number of our successions of momentary feelings, then, when no reference is made to former states of the mind, the consciousness is obviously nothing more than the simple momentary feeling itself as it begins and ceases; and when there is a reference to former states of the mind, we discover on analysis only a remembrance, like all our other remembrances, and a feeling of common relation of the past and the present affection of the mind to one permanent subject. It is the belief of our continued identity which involves this particular feeling of relation of past and present feelings; and consciousness, in this sense of the term, is only a word expressive of that belief.

That the fragrance of a rose, the sound of a flute, and in general all the other objects of sense, might have excited precisely the same immediate sensations as at present, Doctor Reid admits, though the belief of our personal identity had not been impressed upon us; for he ascribes this belief to an instinctive principle only, and acknowledges, that there is nothing in our sensations themselves, from which any such inference could be drawn by reason. If, then, this instinctive belief of identity had not been, as at present, a natural law of human thought, —operating irresistibly on the remembrance of our different feelings, we should have had no notion of *self*, of *me*, the sentient and thinking being, who exists at the present moment, and who existed before the present moment; —and what, then, would have been the consciousness, accompanying, and different from, our sensations, when they merely flashed along the mind and vanished? The most zealous defender of consciousness, as a separate intellectual power, must surely admit, that, in such circumstances, it would have been nothing more than sensation itself. It is the belief of our identity only, which gives us the notion of *self*, as the subject of various feelings, and it is the notion of *self*, as the subject of various former feelings, which leads us to



regard the consciousness of the moment, as different from the sensation of the moment ; because it suggests to us those former feelings, which truly were different from it, or at least that subject mind, which unquestionably existed before the present sensation.

There is, indeed, one other sense, in which we often talk of our consciousness of a feeling, and a sense, in which it must be allowed that the consciousness is not precisely the same as the feeling itself. This is, when we speak of a feeling, not actually existing, at present, but past—as when we say, that we are conscious of having seen, or heard, or done something. Such a use of the term, however, is pardonable only in the privileged looseness and inaccuracy of familiar conversation ; the consciousness, in this case, being precisely synonymous with remembrance or memory, and not a power different from the remembrance. The remembrance of the feeling, and the vivid feeling itself, indeed, are different. But the remembrance, and the consciousness of the remembrance, are the same,—as the consciousness of a sensation, and the sensation, are the same ; and to be conscious that we have seen or spoken to any one, is only to remember that we have seen or spoken to him.

Much of this very confusion with respect to memory, however, I have no doubt, has been always involved in the assertion of consciousness as a peculiar and distinct power of the mind. When we think of feelings long past, it is impossible for us not to be aware that our mind is then truly retrospective ; and memory seems to us sufficient to account for the whole. But when the retrospect is of very recent feelings—of feelings, perhaps, that existed as distinct states of the mind, the very moment before our retrospect began, the short interval is forgotten, and we think that the primary feeling, and our consideration of the feeling, are strictly simultaneous. We have a sensation ;—we look instantly back on that sensation,—such is consciousness, as distinguished from the feeling that is said to be its object. When it is any thing more than the sensation, thought, or emotion, of which we are said to be conscious, it is a brief and rapid retrospect. Its object is not a present feeling, but a past feeling, as truly as when we look back, not on the moment immediately preceding, but on some distant event or emotion of our boyhood.

After thus distinguishing all that is truly present in consciousness, from common remembrance, I surely need not undertake, at any length, to distinguish it from that peculiar species of remembrance, which goes under the name of *conscience* ; though their similar etymol-

ogy may have a slight tendency to mislead. *Conscience* is our *moral memory*;—it is the *memory of the heart*, if I may apply to it a phrase, which, in its original application, was much more happily employed by one of the deaf and dumb pupils of the Abbé Sicard, who, on being asked what he understood by the word *gratitude*, wrote down immediately, “*Gratitude is the memory of the heart.*”

The power of conscience does, indeed, what consciousness does not. It truly doubles all our feelings, when they have been such as virtue inspired; “*Hoc est vivere bis, vitâ posse priore frui* ;” and it multiplies them in a much more fearful proportion, when they have been of an opposite kind,—arresting as it were every moment of guilt, which, of itself, would have passed away, as fugitive as our other moments, and suspending them forever before our eyes in fixed and terrifying reality. But this species of memory, which we denominate *conscience*, and, indeed, every species of memory, which must necessarily have for its object the past, is essentially different from the consciousness which we have been considering, that, in its very definition, is limited to present feelings, and of which, if we really had such an intellectual power, our moral conscience would, in Dr Reid’s sense of the term, be an object rather than a part.

Consciousness, then, in its simplest acceptation, when it is understood as regarding the present only, is no distinct power of the mind, or name of a distinct class of feelings, but is only a general term for all our feelings, of whatever species these may be, sensations, thoughts, desires;—in short, all those states or affections of mind, in which the phenomena of mind consist; and when it expresses more than this, it is only the remembrance of some former state of the mind, and a feeling of the relation of the past and the present as states of one sentient substance.

## CHAPTER VIII.

OF MENTAL IDENTITY.—IDENTITY IRRECONCILABLE WITH THE DOCTRINE OF MATERIALISM.—DIFFERENCE BETWEEN PERSONAL AND MENTAL IDENTITY.—DIRECT EVIDENCE OF MENTAL IDENTITY.—OBJECTIONS ANSWERED.

## SECTION I.

I now proceed to a most important inquiry, which arises necessarily from the consideration of the successions of our momentary consciousness, and must be considered as involved in all our attempts to arrange them,—the inquiry into the Identity of the Mind, as truly *one* and *permanent*, amid all the variety of its fugitive affections.

In our examination of this very wonderful coincidence of sameness and diversity, I shall confine my remarks to the phenomena which are purely mental, omitting the objections drawn from the daily waste and daily aliment of our corporeal part, the whole force of which objection may be admitted, without any scruple by those who contend for the identity only of the thinking principle; since the individuality of this would be as little destroyed, though every particle of the body were completely changed, as the individuality of the body itself would be destroyed, by a change of the mere garments that invest it. The manner in which the mind is united to a system of particles, which are in a perpetual state of flux, is, indeed, more than we can ever hope to be able to explain; though it is really not more inexplicable, than its union to such a system of particles would be, though they were to continue forever unchanged.

I may remark however, by the way, that though the constant state of flux of the corporeal particles furnishes no argument against the identity of the principle which feels and thinks, if feeling and thought be states of a substance that is essentially distinct from these changing particles, the unity and identity of this principle, amid all the corporeal changes,—if it can truly be proved to be identical,—furnish a very strong argument in disproof of those systems which consider thought and feeling as the result of material organization.

The *identity*, which we are to consider, is the identity only of the principle which feels and thinks, without regard to the changeable state of the particles of the brain, or of the body in general. This unity and permanence of the principle which thinks, should rather be call-

ed *mental* identity, than *personal* identity, though the latter phrase may now be considered as almost fixed by the general use of philosophers. On no system can there be this absolute identity, unless as strictly mental ; for, if we adopt the system of materialism, we must reject the absolute lasting identity of the thinking principle altogether ; and if we do not adopt that system, it is in the *mind* alone that we must conceive the identity to subsist. The *person* in the common and familiar meaning of the term, though involving the mind, is yet more than the mere mind ; and, by those, at least, who are not conversant with the writings of philosophers on the subject, sameness of person would be understood as not *mental* only, but as combining with the absolute identity of the mind, some sort of identity of the body also ; though it must be confessed, that, in its application to the body, the term *identity* is not used with the same strictness, as in its application to the mind ; the bodily identity being not absolute, but admitting of considerable, and ultimately, perhaps, even of total change, provided only the change be so gradual, as not to be inconsistent with apparent continuity of existence. Still, however, identity of *person*, at least in the popular notion of it, is something more than identity of mind.

The identity of the thinking principle has been strongly contested. Identity, it is urged, requires sameness of qualities. That of which the qualities are different, cannot be the same ; and the only mode of discovering whether a substance have the same or different qualities, is to observe, how it affects and is affected by other substances. It is recognised by us as the same, or, at least, as perfectly similar, when, in two corresponding series of changes, the same substances affect *it* in the same manner, and *it* affects, in the same manner, the same substances ; and when either the same substances do not affect it in the same manner, or it does not affect in the same manner the same substances, we have no hesitation in considering it as different. Thus, if a white substance, resembling exactly, in every external appearance, a lump of sugar, do not melt when exposed to the action of boiling water, we do not regard it as sugar, because the water does not act on it as we have uniformly known it to act on that substance ; or if the same white lump, in every other respect resembling sugar, affect our taste as bitter or acid rather than sweet, we immediately, in like manner, cease to consider it as sugar, because it does not act upon our nerves of taste in the same manner as sugar acts upon them. The complete similarity, in other respects, is far from sufficient to make us alter our judgment ; a single circumstance of manifest difference, in its mode either of act-

ing upon other substances, or of being acted upon by them, being sufficient to destroy the effect of a thousand manifest resemblances.

Let this test of identity, then, be applied to the *mind*, at different periods, if the test be allowed to be a just one ; and let it be seen, whether, in the series of changes in which it acts or is acted upon, the phenomena precisely correspond in every case. If the same objects do not act upon it in the same manner, it must then be different according to the very definition to which we are supposed to have assented.

When we compare the listless inactivity of the infant, slumbering from the moment at which he takes his milky food, to the moment at which he awakes to require it again, with the restless energies of that mighty being which he is to become, in his maturer years, pouring truth after truth, in rapid and dazzling profusion, upon the world, or grasping in his single hand the destiny of empires, how few are the circumstances of resemblance which we can trace, of all that intelligence which is afterwards to be displayed ; how little more is seen, than what serves to give feeble motion to the mere machinery of life. What prophetic eye can venture to look beyond the period of distinct utterance, and discern that variety of character by which even boyhood is marked, far less the intellectual and moral growth of the years that follow—the genius, before whose quick glance the errors and prejudices, which all the ages and nations of mankind have received as truths, are to disappear—the political wisdom, with which in his calm and silent meditations, he is to afford more security to his country than could be given to it by a thousand armies, and which, with a single thought, is to spread protection and happiness to the most distant lands—or that ferocious ambition, with which in unfortunate circumstances of power, he is perhaps to burst the whole frame of civil society, and to stamp, through every age, the deep and dark impression of his existence, in the same manner as he leaves on the earth which he has desolated, the track of his sanguinary footsteps. The cradle has its equality almost as the grave. Talents, imbecilities, virtues, vices, slumber in it together, undistinguished ; and it is well that it is so, since, to those who are most interested in the preservation of a life that would be helpless but for their aid, it leaves those delightful illusions which more than repay their anxiety and fatigue, and allows them to hope for a single being, every thing which it is possible for the race of man to become. If clearer presages of the future mind were then discoverable, how large a portion of human happiness would be destroyed by this single circumstance. What pleasure could the mother feel, in her most delightful of offices,

if she knew that she was nursing into strength, powers, which were to be exerted for the misery of that great or narrow circle, in which they were destined to move, and which to her were to be a source, not of blessing, but of grief, and shame, and despair !

Is the mind, then, in infancy, and in mature life, precisely the same, when, in the one case, so many prominent diversities of character force themselves upon the view, and, in the other case, so little appears to distinguish the future ornament of mankind, from him who is afterwards

"To eat his glutton meal with greedy haste,  
Nor know the hand which feeds him?"

If we apply the test of identity, do we find that the same objects, in these different periods, act upon the mind in exactly the same manner ; and are its own feelings, in the successive trains, intellectual and moral, of which they form a part, attended with consequents exactly the same ?

Every age,—if we may speak of many ages, in the few years of human life,—seems to be marked with a distinct character. Each has its peculiar objects that excite lively affections ; and in each, exertion is excited by affections, which, in other periods, terminate without inducing active desire. The boy finds a world in less space than that which bounds his visible horizon ; he wanders over his range of field, and exhausts his strength in pursuit of objects, which, in the years that follow, are seen only to be neglected ; while, to him, the objects that are afterwards to absorb his whole soul, are as indifferent as the objects of his present passions are destined then to appear.

In the progress of life, though we are often gratified with the prospect of benevolence increasing as its objects increase, and of powers rising over the greatness of their past attainments, this gratification is not always ours. Not slight changes of character only appear, which require our attentive investigation to trace them, but, in innumerable cases, complete and striking contrasts press, of themselves, upon view. How many melancholy opportunities must every one have had of witnessing the progress of intellectual decay, and the coldness that steals upon the once benevolent heart ! We quit our country, perhaps at an early period of life, and, after an absence of many years, we return with all the remembrances of past pleasure, which grow more tender as we approach their objects. We eagerly seek him, to whose paternal voice we have been accustomed to listen, with the same reverence as if its predictions had possessed oracular certainty,—who first led us into knowledge, and whose image has been

constantly joined in our mind, with all that veneration which does not forbid love. We find him sunk, perhaps, in the imbecility of idiotism, unable to recognise us,—ignorant alike of the past and of the future, and living only in the sensibility of animal gratification. We seek the favourite companion of our childhood, whose gentleness of heart we have often witnessed when we have wept together over the same ballad, or in the thousand little incidents that called forth our mutual compassion, in those years when compassion requires so little to call it forth. We find him hardened into man, meeting us scarcely with the cold hypocrisy of dissembled friendship,—in his general relations to the world, careless of the misery which *he* is not to feel,—and, if he ever think of the happiness of others, seeking it as an instrument, not as an end. When we thus observe all that made us one, and gave an heroic interest even to our childish adventures, absorbed in the chillness of selfish enjoyment, do we truly recognise in him the same unaltered friend, from whom we were accustomed to regret our separation, and do we use only a metaphor of little meaning, when we say of him, that he is become a different person, and that his mind and character are changed? In what does the identity consist? The same objects no longer act upon him in the same manner; the same views of things are no longer followed by similar approbation or disapprobation, grief, joy, admiration, disgust; and if we affirm that substance to be, in the strictest sense of identity, the same, on which, in two corresponding series of phenomena, the same objects act differently, while itself also acts differently on the same objects; in short, in which the antecedents being the same, the consequents are different, and, the consequents being the same, the antecedents are different, what definition of absolute diversity can we give, with which this affirmation of absolute identity may not be equally consistent? The supposed test of identity, when applied to the mind in these cases, completely fails. It neither affects, nor is affected, in the same manner, in the same circumstances. It, therefore, if the test be a just one, is not the same identical mind.

There is another argument that may be urged against the identity of the mind, which has at least equal semblance of force, though it does not occur so readily as that already stated.

The mere diversity of our feelings at different moments, it may be said, is of itself incompatible with the strict and absolute unity which is supposed to belong to the thinking principle. If joy and sorrow, such as every one has felt, be different, that which is joyful, and that

which is sorrowful, cannot be precisely the same. On the supposition of complete unity and permanence of the thinking principle, nothing is added to it, nothing is taken away from it; and, as it has no parts, no internal change of elementary composition can take place in it. But that to which nothing is added, from which nothing is taken away, and which has no parts to vary their own relative positions and affinities, is so strictly the same, it may be said, that it would surely be absurd to predicate of it any diversity whatever. Joy and sorrow imply an unquestionable diversity of some kind; and if this diversity cannot be predicated of that substance which is precisely the same, without addition, subtraction, or any internal change of composition whatever, that which is joyful, and that which sorrowful, cannot have absolute identity; or if we affirm, that a diversity, so striking as to form an absolute contrast, is yet not inconsistent with complete and permanent unity and identity, we may, in like manner, affirm, that a substance which is hard, heavy, blue, transparent,—which unites with acids, not with alkalis,—and which is volatilizable at a low temperature, is precisely the same substance as that, which is soft, light, green, opaque,—which unites with alkalis, not with acids,—and which is absolutely infusible and fixed in the highest temperature to which we can expose it.

## SECTION II.

Since the exposure of the fallacy, on which the foregoing objections are founded, would afford only a sort of negative evidence of that great truth which they oppose, it will be of advantage, before entering on an examination of the objections themselves, to state the nature of that *positive* evidence, which does not, indeed, lead us to the belief of the unity and permanence of our spiritual being, by that slow process which is denominated reasoning, but constitutes to us, primarily and directly, an impossibility of disbelieving it.

The belief of our identity is not the result of any series of propositions, but arises immediately, in certain circumstances, from a principle of thought, as essential to the very nature of the mind, as its powers of perception or memory, or as the power of reasoning itself, on the essential validity of which, and consequently on the intuitive belief of some first truth on which it is founded, every objection to the force of



these very truths themselves must ultimately rest. To object is to argue; and to argue is to assert the validity of argument, and, therefore, of the primary evidence, from which the evidence of each succeeding proposition of the argument flows. To object to the authority of such primary intuitive belief, would thus be to reason against reason,—to affirm and deny at the same moment,—and to own that the very arguments which we urge are unworthy of being received and credited.

All belief, it is evident, must be either *direct* or *indirect*. It is direct, when a proposition, without regard to any former proposition expressed or understood, is admitted as soon as it is expressed in words, or as soon as it rises silently in the mind. Such are all the order of truths, which have been denominated, on this account, *first truths*. The belief is indirect, when the force of the proposition, to which assent is given, is admitted only in consequence of the previous admission of some former proposition, with which it is felt to be intimately connected; and the statement in words, or the internal development of these relative propositions, in the order in which their relation to the primary proposition is felt, is all that constitutes reasoning. The indirect belief which attends the result of reasoning, even in the proudest demonstration, is thus only another form of some *first truth*, which was believed directly and independently of reasoning; and, without this primary intuitive assent, the demonstration itself, in all its beautiful precision and regularity, would be as powerless and futile as the most incoherent verbal wrangling.

Without some principles of immediate belief, then, it is manifest, that we could have no belief whatever; for we believe one proposition, because we discover its relation to some other proposition, which is itself, perhaps, related, in like manner, to some other proposition formerly admitted, but which, carried back as far as it may, through the longest series of ratiocination, must ultimately come to some primary proposition, which we admit from the evidence contained in itself, or, to speak more accurately, which we believe from the mere impossibility of disbelieving it. All reasoning, then, the most skeptical, as well as the most dogmatical, must proceed on some principles, which are taken for granted, because the admission of these first principles is a necessary part of our intellectual constitution.

So little accustomed are we, however, to think of the primary, fundamental evidence of every reasoning, while we give our whole attention to the consecutive propositions which derive from it their force, that

we learn, in this manner, to consider truth and reasoning as necessarily connected, and to regard the assertion of truths that do not flow from reasoning, as the assertion of something which it would be equally unworthy of philosophy to assert or to admit ; though every assertion and every admission, which the profoundest reasoner can make, must, as we have seen, involve the direct or indirect statement of some truth of this kind. Nor is it wonderful that we should thus think more of the reasoning itself, than of the foundation of the reasoning ; since the first truths, which give force to reasoning but require no reasoning to establish them, must necessarily be of a kind which all admit, and which, therefore, as always believed by us and undisputed by others, have excited no interest in discussion, and have never seemed to add to our stock of knowledge, like the results of reasoning, which have added to it truth after truth. Yet that they are thus uninteresting to us, is the effect only of their primary, and universal, and permanent force. They are the only truths, in short, which every one admits ; and they seem to us unworthy of being maintained as truths, merely because they are the only truths which are so irresistible in evidence, as to preclude the possibility of a denial.

It is not as the primary evidence of all our processes of reasoning, however, that they are chiefly valuable. Every action of our lives is an exemplification of some one or other of these truths, as practically felt by us. Why do we believe, that what we remember truly took place, and that the course of nature will be in future such as we have already observed it ? Without the belief of these physical truths, we could not exist a day, and yet there is no reasoning from which they can be inferred.

These principles of intuitive belief, so necessary for our very existence, and too important, therefore, to be left to the casual discovery of reason, are, as it were, an internal, never-ceasing voice from the Creator and Preserver of our being. The reasonings of men, admitted by some, and denied by others, have over us but a feeble power, which resembles the general frailty of man himself. These internal revelations from on high, however, are omnipotent like their Author. It is impossible for us to doubt them, because to disbelieve them would be to deny what our very constitution was formed to admit. Even the atheist himself, therefore, if, indeed, there be one who truly rejects a Creator and Ruler of the universe, is thus every moment in which he adapts his conduct implicitly, and without reasoning, to these directions of the Wisdom that formed him, obeying, with most exact subserviency, that very Voice which he is professing to question or to deride.

Though there is no human being who must not have felt doubts on some point or other, it is not every one who knows how to doubt. To the perfection of a doubt, indeed, it is essential, that it should have a beginning, a middle, and in many cases, too, though not in all, an end. The middle is a very easy matter; the great difficulty relates to the beginning and the end. We err equally, when the doubt ceases too soon, and when it does not cease where it ought to cease. There is a skepticism as different from the true spirit of philosophy, as the most contented ignorance, that has never questioned a single prejudice; a skepticism, which, instead of seeking to distinguish truth from falsehood, professes to deny altogether the competency of our faculties as to making such a distinction in any case, and to which any proposition, therefore, is as likely as its opposite. With this wild, half-reasoning extravagance, which is ignorant whether it affirms or denies, and which does not even know certainly that it has any uncertainty at all, it would be manifestly absurd to reason; and we may even truly say of it, notwithstanding the high character of perfect doubting which it affects, that it does not know how to doubt, more than the all-credulous imbecility which it despises and derides; because it does not know in what circumstances doubt is legitimate, and in what circumstances it should cease. But, at the same time, he also, it may be said, does not know how to doubt, who is completely satisfied with the result of an inquiry which he is capable of prosecuting still further,—even though it were only by the addition of a single step to the thousand which he may already have made. Truth is the last link of many long chains; the first links of all of which, Nature has placed in our hands. When we have fairly arrived at the last, and feel completely that there is no link beyond, it would be manifestly absurd to suppose, that we can still proceed further;—but if we stop before we have arrived at the last, maintaining, without stretching out our hand to make the experiment, that there cannot be yet another link after that which we have reached, it matters not how far we may have advanced. Truth is still beyond us—to be grasped only by an arm more vigorous and persevering.

Much evil, it must be admitted, would arise in the Philosophy of Mind, from a disposition to acquiesce too soon in instinctive principles of belief. But though these may be, and have been, multiplied unnecessarily, and beyond the truth of nature, as may be seen in the works of Dr. Reid and some other Scotch philosophers, it is not less certain, that of our mental nature such principles are truly a part. We should, indeed, draw monsters, not men, if we were to represent the hu-

man head and trunk with a double proportion of arms and legs ; but we should also give an unfaithful portraiture of the human figure, and should draw monsters, not men, if we were to present them with but one arm and leg, or with no arm or leg at all. In like manner, to suppose the mind endowed with more principles of intuition than belong to it, would be to imagine a species of mental monster. But it would not less be a mental monster, if we were to attempt to strip it of the principles which it truly possesses.

If there be, as it has been already shown that there must be, intuitive truths ; and, if we are not to reject, but only to weigh cautiously, the belief which seems to us intuitive, it will be difficult to find any, which has a better claim to this distinction, than the faith which we have in our identity, as one continued sentient and thinking being, or rather, to speak more accurately, as one permanent being capable of many varieties of sensation and thought. There is to be found in it, every circumstance which can be required to substantiate it as a law of intuitive belief. It is universal, irresistible, immediate. Indeed so truly prior and paramount is it to mere reasoning, that the very notion of reasoning necessarily involves the belief of our identity as admitted. To reason, is to draw a conclusion from some former proposition ; and how can one truth be inferred from another truth, unless the mind, which admits the one, be the mind, which admitted the other ? In its order, as much as in its importance, it may be truly considered as the first of those truths which do not depend on reasoning, and as itself necessarily implied, perhaps in all, certainly in the greater number, of our other intuitions. I believe, for example, without being able to infer it, or even to discover the greater probability of it, by any process of reasoning, that the course of nature in future will resemble the past ; and, since all mankind have the same irresistible tendency, I have no scruple in referring it to an original principle of our nature. In taking for granted this similarity, however, in the order of succession of two distinct sets of phenomena, I must previously have believed, that *I*, the same sentient being, who expect a certain order in the future phenomena of nature, have already observed a certain order in the past.

Since, then the belief of our identity is intuitive and irresistible, the only inquiry which remains is as to the circumstances in which the belief arises. Identity is a relative term. It implies of course, in every instance, a double observation of some sort. The identity of our mind is its continuance as the subject of various feelings, or at least as that which is susceptible of various feelings. The belief of it, therefore,

can arise only on the consideration of its successive phenomena ; and is indeed involved in the mere consideration of these as successive.

The knowledge of our *mind* as a *substance*, and the belief of our *identity* during successive feelings, may be considered as the same notion, expressed in different words. Our identity is the unity and sameness of that which thinks and feels,—itself substantially unchanged amid the endless variety of its thoughts and feelings,—capable of existing separately in all these different states ; not ceasing therefore when they cease, but independent of their transient changes. The knowledge of mind, then, as a substance, implying the belief of identity during changes of state, cannot be involved in any one of these separate states ; and if our feelings merely succeeded each other, in the same manner as the moving bodies of a long procession are reflected from a mirror, without any vestige of them as past, or consequently, any remembrance of their successions, we should be as incapable of forming a notion of the sentient substance *mind*, abstracted from the momentary sensation, as the mirror itself ; though we should indeed differ from the mirror, in having what mind only can have, the sensations themselves, thus rapidly existing and perishing.

But if it be only on the consideration of some *past* feeling, that the belief of the permanent substance mind can arise, it is to the principle which recalls to us past feelings, that the belief is ultimately to be traced. We remember ;—and in that remembrance is involved the belief, the source of which we seek. It is not merely a past feeling that arises to us, in what is commonly termed memory, but a feeling that is recognised by us as ours, in that past time of which we think,—a feeling, therefore, of that mind which now remembers what it before saw, perhaps, or heard, or enjoyed, or suffered. The process itself is sufficiently simple, however truly wonderful one of the feelings may be which forms the most important part of the process ;—for we are not to forget that the remembrance itself, the revealer of the past, is not a past, but a present feeling. It is the mind existing for the present moment in a particular state, as much as any primary and immediate sensation is the mind existing in a particular state. That this state of remembrance, itself a present feeling, should be representative to us of some former feeling, so as to impress us irresistibly with the belief of that former state of the mind, is indeed most wonderful ; but that it does impress us with this belief, is as undeniable as the belief itself is irresistible.

Our faith in our identity, being only another form of the faith which we put in memory, can be questioned only by those who deny all memory, and with memory all reasoning of every kind,—who believe only the existence of the present moment, and who with respect to every thing else, are as incapable of opposing or questioning as they are of believing. If our memory be unworthy of the faith which we intuitively give to it, all that is founded on memory, and therefore demonstration itself, must equally deceive us. We cannot admit the most rigid demonstration, or expect it to be admitted, without having already admitted, intuitively, that identity, which in words only we profess to question, and to question which, even in words, is to assert the reality of that which we deny.

The belief of the identity of self, then, as the one permanent subject of the transient feelings remembered by us, arises from a law of thought, which is essential to the very constitution of the mind. It has accordingly all the qualities, which can be required by the most rigid scrutinizer of our principles of intuitive assent. It is universal, and immediate, and irresistible.

This consideration is of itself decisive of the question of *identity*; since, if it be manifest, that there is an universal, immediate, and irresistible impression of our identity,—an impression, which cannot be traced to any law of thought more simple,—its truth is established by a species of evidence, which must be allowed to be valid, before the very objections can be put, in which it is professedly denied;—every objection, however skeptical, involving, as we have seen, and necessarily involving, the assertion of some such intuitive proposition, from which alone its authority, if it have any authority, is derived.

But though the belief of the identity of the substance which thinks, is thus established on the firmest of all grounds, the very ground, as we have seen, on which demonstration itself is founded,—even though no particular fallacy could be traced in the objections brought against it,—it is still an interesting inquiry, in what the fallacy of the objections consists.

The objections brought against the identity of the mind, from a supposed incompatibility of its diversities of state with sameness of substance, appear to depend on the assumption of a test of identity, transferred, without sufficient reason, from the obvious appearances of matter to mind, and which, if matter be accurately considered, is equally false, too, as applied to it.

Diversity of any kind, it is said, is inconsistent with absolute identity, in any case, and in the mind, which is by supposition indivisible, nothing can be added to it or taken away, and no internal change can take place in the relative positions and affinities of parts which it has not. Joy and sorrow are different in themselves; that which is joyful, therefore, and that which is sorrowful, cannot be precisely the same, or diversity of any kind might be consistent with absolute identity. That the joyful and sorrowful mind are precisely the same, is not asserted, if the sameness be meant to imply sameness of state; for it is admitted, that the state of the mind is different in joy and sorrow; and the only question is, whether this difference, to which we give the name of difference of state, be incompatible with complete and absolute sameness of substance.

The true key to the sophistry is, that it assumes a false test of identity, borrowed, indeed, from the obvious appearances of the material world, but from these obvious appearances only. Because diversity of any kind seems, in these familiar cases, to be inconsistent with absolute identity, we draw hastily the universal conclusion, that it is inconsistent with absolute identity, in any case. Paradoxical as the assertion may appear, however, we may safely assert, that, not in mind only, but, as we shall find, in matter also, some sort of diversity is so far from being inconsistent with absolute identity, that there is scarcely a single moment, if, indeed, there be a single moment, in which every atom in the universe is not constantly changing the tendencies that form its physical character, without the slightest alteration of its own absolute identity; so that the variety of states or tendencies of the same identical mind, in joy and sorrow, ignorance and knowledge, instead of being opposed by the general analogy of nature, is in exact harmony with that general analogy. It is from our view of matter, unquestionably, as implying, in all its visible changes of state, some loss of identity, some addition or subtraction of particles, or change of their form of combination, that the objection, with respect to the identity of the mind, during its momentary or lasting changes of state, is derived; and yet we shall find, that it is only when we consider even matter itself superficially and slightly, that we ascribe the changes which take place in it, to circumstances that affect its identity.

SECTION III.

In experimental philosophy, and in the obvious natural phenomena of the material world, whenever a body changes its state, some addition or separation has previously taken place. Thus, water becomes steam by the addition, and it becomes ice by the loss, of a portion of that matter of heat which is termed by chemists *caloric*; which loss and addition are, of course, inconsistent with the notion of absolute numerical identity of the corpuscles, in the three states of water as a solid, a liquid, and a gaseous vapour. *Perception*, by which the mind is metaphorically said to acquire knowledge, and *forgetfulness*, by which it is metaphorically said to lose knowledge, have, it must be confessed, a very striking analogy to these processes of corpuscular loss and gain; and, since absolute identity seems to be inconsistent with a change of state in the one set of phenomena, with which we are constantly familiar, we find difficulty in persuading ourselves, that it is not inconsistent with a change of state in the other set also. It is because some substantial loss or gain does truly take place in the changing phenomena of the bodies immediately around us, to which we are accustomed to pay our principal attention, that we learn to regard a change of state in matter as significant of loss of identity, and to feel, therefore, some hesitation in admitting the mental changes of state to be consistent with absolute sameness of substance. Had our observation of the material phenomena been different, there would have been a corresponding difference in our view of the changes of the phenomena of the mind.

If for example, instead of previously gaining or losing caloric,—as in the constitution of things of which we have our present experience,—the particles of the water had suddenly assumed the state of vapour on the sounding of a trumpet at a distance, and the state of ice immediately on the rising of the sun,—in short, if the different changes of state in bodies, by which their physical character for the time seems, in many cases, to be wholly altered, had occurred without any apparent loss or gain of substance, we should then no longer have found the same difficulty in admitting the changes of state in mind as consistent with its identity; and the sentient substance, which previously existed in a different state, might then, on the sounding of a trumpet, have been conceived by us to begin to exist in the state which constitutes that particular sensation of hearing, or, on the rising of the sun, to exist in that different state which constitutes the sun's change of colour, as readily as the material



substance, previously existing in the form of water, to begin at the same moment, without any essential or numerical change, and consequently with perfect identity, to exist in the new state of steam, or in the state of a crystalline mass, as solid as the rock from which it hangs as an icicle, or that glitters with its gemmy covering.

But the system of nature, even according to our present experience of it, furnishes sufficient proof of changes as wonderful in the state of bodies produced obviously at a distance, and, therefore, without any loss or addition which can affect their identity. For sufficient evidence of this, I need appeal only to the agency of the celestial gravitation; that gigantic energy of nature which fills the universe, like the immediate presence of the Deity himself,—to which, in the immensity of its influence, the distances, not from planets to planets merely, but from suns to suns, are like those invisible spaces between the elements of the bodies around us, that seem actual contact to our eyes,—and in comparison with which, the powers, that play their feeble part in the physical changes on the surface of our earth, are as inconsiderable as the atoms, on which they exercise their little dominion, are to the massy orbs which it wields and directs at will.

The action of these great planetary bodies on each other,—it surely cannot be denied,—leaves them separate identities, precisely as before; and it is a species of agency, so essential to the magnificent harmony of the system, that we cannot conceive it to have been interrupted, for a single moment, since the universe itself was formed. An action, therefore, has been constantly taking place on all the bodies in the universe,—and consequently a difference of some sort produced,—which yet leaves their identities unaffected. But, though the identity of the substance of the separate orbs is not affected by their mutual attractions, the state, or temporary physical character, of these orbs,—considered individually as one great whole,—must be affected,—or it would be absurd to speak of their mutual agency at all; for action implies the sequence of a change of some sort, and there can be no action, therefore, where the substances continue precisely the same, and their state also precisely the same, as before the action. Accordingly, we find, on our own globe, that great changes of state, such as form the most striking of its regular visible phenomena, are produced by this distant operation. The waters of our ocean, for example, rise and fall,—and therefore, must have altered states, or physical tendencies, in consequence of which they rise and fall, as there is no corresponding addition or subtraction of matter,—at regular intervals,—which it is in

our power to predict with infallible accuracy,—not because we can divine any loss of identity in the fluid mass,—any internal change in its elementary composition, or the nature and varieties of the winds, which are to sweep along its surface,—but because we know well, at what hours, and in what relative situation, a certain great body, at the distance of some hundreds of thousands of miles, is to be passing along the heavens.

If, then, the mere position of a distant heavenly body can cause the particles of our ocean to arrange themselves in a different configuration, from that in which they would otherwise have existed, and, therefore, must have produced in the particles that change of state, which forces them, as it were, into this altered form,—without addition to them of any thing, or subtraction of any thing,—in short, leaving in them the same absolute numerical or corpuscular identity as before,—there surely can be no greater difficulty, in supposing, as in the case before imagined, that a certain position of the sun might have immediately caused particles of a distant liquid to arrange themselves in the particular configuration, that constitutes the solid ice,—which, though perhaps a more striking change of state, would not have been more truly a change of state, than that, which it now unquestionably produces, in modifying the rise or fall of our tides. And, if a distant body can produce in matter a change of state, without affecting its identity, by any addition or subtraction, we may surely admit, that the presence of an external body, as in perception, may, in mind also, produce a change of state, without affecting its identity ; unless indeed, (which is not impossible, because nothing is impossible to human folly,) — we should be inclined to reverse our prejudices, and maintain, that matter may be easily conceived to change the affinities or tendencies that form its physical character, in the particular circumstances observed, without any addition or subtraction of substance, but that some positive addition or subtraction of substance is, notwithstanding, essential to the simple changes or affections of the mind.

If the moon were suddenly annihilated, our earth would still be the same identical planet, without the loss or gain of a single particle of substance. But the state of this planet, as a whole, and of every atom of this planet, would be instantly altered, in many most important respects,—so completely altered, indeed, that not an atom of the mass would tend to the other atoms of the mass, in the same manner as before. In like manner, if the light,—which now, operating on one of my organs of sense, causes my mind to exist in the state that consti-

tutes the sensation of a particular colour,—were suddenly to vanish, the state of my mind would be instantly changed, though my mind itself, considered as a substance, would still continue unaltered. In both cases,—the spiritual, and the material,—and in both cases, alike,—absolute identity, in the strictest sense of the term, is consistent with innumerable diversities.

In the case of operations at a distance, it is impossible for us, not to perceive, that, even in matter, a change of state is not inconsistent with complete permanence of absolute corpuscular identity ; while, in the compositions or decompositions that occur spontaneously, or by artificial experiment, in the physical changes on the surface of our earth, the additions or subtractions of matter, that appear to us to constitute these phenomena, truly destroy the corpuscular identity of the substances, in which the change takes place ; and the change of state is thus considered by us as implying a positive, substantial change. But when we examine even these phenomena a little more deeply, we shall find, that,—like the great operations of gravitation on the masses of the universe,—the change, in these also, is not a positive change of substance, but is simply a change of state in a congeries of independent substances, which we term one substance, merely because the spaces, that are really between them, are imperceptible to our very imperfect organs ; the addition or subtraction of matter being not that which constitutes new states or tendencies of the particles which continue present, but merely that which gives occasion to those changes of state or tendency ;—as the positions of the heavenly bodies do not constitute the phenomena of our tides, but merely give occasion to that difference of state in the particles of the ocean, in consequence of which they assume of themselves a different configuration. Man is placed, as it has been truly said, on a point between two infinities,—the infinitely great, and the infinitely little. It may be an extravagant speculation, but it is not absolutely absurd, to suppose, that in the unbounded system of nature there may be beings, to whose vision the whole planetary attendants of each separate sun, which to us appear to revolve at distances so immense, may yet seem but one small cohesive mass ; in the same manner, as to those animalcula, whose existence and successive generations had been altogether unknown to man, till the microscope created them, as it were, to his feeble sight,—and which, perhaps are mighty animals compared with races of beings still more minute, that are constantly living in our very presence, and yet destined never to be known to us,—those bodies, which to us seem one cohesive mass, may appear sep-

arated by distances, relatively as great, as to us are those of the planets. That light, itself a *body*, should pass freely through a mass of solid crystal, is regarded by us as a sort of physical wonder ; and yet it is far from impossible, that, between the atoms which compose this apparently solid mass, whole nations of living beings may be dwelling, and exercising their mutual works of peace or hostility ; while perhaps, if philosophy can be exercised in brains of such infinitesimal dimensions in the same manner as in our coarser organs, the nature of the atoms, or distant worlds around them, may be dividing with endless absurdities the Ptolemies and Aristotles of the little republics.

Whatever may be thought of speculations of this kind, however, with respect to the relative distance of the atoms of bodies, it is not the less certain, that these atoms are separate substances, independent of the other similar or different substances that apparently adhere to them in continuity,—that they are, in truth, the only material substances which really exist, since the bodies which we term masses are only those very atoms under another name,—that they remain, and cannot but remain, identical, amid all the changes of chemical composition or decomposition,—and that the change which they suffer, therefore, however strikingly their physical character may be altered for the time, is a change not of substance, but of state only. In the case of the formation of ice, for example, the elementary atoms themselves, which are all that truly exist in nature, are not, and cannot be, changed ; but particles, which were formerly easily separable from adjacent particles, now resist this separation by a considerable force. There is a change in their state, therefore, since they now exist with a different degree of tendency toward each other,—a change, to which the separation of a quantity of caloric may, indeed, have given occasion, but which is to be distinguished from that momentary separation itself, since the solidity, which is only another name for the corpuscular resistance, continues after the separation is complete, and would continue forever, unless a change of temperature were again to restore that former state or tendency of the particles, in which they were easily separable. To him who has learned to consider bodies as, what they truly are, a multitude of separate and independent corpuscles, there is no change of identity, and cannot be any change of identity, in all the phenomena or changes of the universe. The atoms, which alone existed, continue as before ; and all which constitutes the phenomenon, or varieties of successive phenomena, is a change of their place or tendency.

This corpuscular view of the material universe,—which, of course, admits an infinite variety of applications, corresponding with the infinite

variety of its phenomena,—has many most striking analogies in that moral universe, with the phenomena of which we are chiefly concerned.

To this corpuscular view, however, though it is unquestionably the sort of view to which, in our ultimate physical inquiries into the phenomena of matter, we must come, some may, perhaps, not be sufficiently accustomed, to enter fully into the reasoning on the subject. It will probably be less difficult for such, if we take rather, as an illustration, the simpler case of impulse; in which the bodies affecting each other are not, as in chemistry, undistinguishable corpuscles, but masses, clearly defined, and easily perceptible.

When a billiard ball, on being struck, approaches another which is at rest, it soon arrives at the point of seeming, but not actual contact, at which their mutual attraction ceases, and the force which it has acquired still carrying it on, it passes this bounding point, and arrives at a point, at which repulsion has already begun. Accordingly the body, formerly at rest, now flies off, on a principle precisely similar (though the mere direction be opposite) to that by which the same ball, if dropped from a hand that supported it, would, without the actual impulse of any body, have quitted its state of rest, as in the present case, and have gravitated, or, which is the same thing, have moved of itself toward the earth.

Before the first ball A, arrived so very near to the second ball B, as to have come within the sphere of their mutual repulsion, this second ball was at rest, that is to say, it had no tendency to move in any direction. This state of rest, however, is only one of the many states, in which a body may exist; and if, which must surely be allowed, a body having a tendency to continued motion, be in a different state from one which has no such tendency, this change of state, implying, it must be remarked, not even the slightest loss of identity, has been produced in the body B, by the mere vicinity of the body A. For the sake of illustration, let us now suppose this body A to be hot or luminous. It will still, as before, produce the new state of tendency to motion in B, when it arrives within the limits of their sphere of repulsion. Is it less conceivable, then, that the mere presence of this hot or luminous body should produce the new sensation of warmth, or of colour, which are different states of the sentient mind, without affecting in the slightest degree the identity of the mind itself, than that it should produce, without any loss of absolute identity, in the body B, an immediate tendency, in that body, to move along with a certain velocity, a state as different

from that in which it remains at rest, as the sensation of warmth, which is one state of the mind, is different from the sensation of colour, which is another state of the mind? Nor does the parallel end here; for, since a body at rest, acquiring a tendency to begin motion in one particular direction, as, for example, to move north, must be in a different state from that in which it would have been, if it had acquired an instant tendency to move east, or in any other direction; and, the direction once begun being the same, since a body having a tendency to move with one velocity must, at every moment of its progress, be in a different state from that in which it has a tendency to move with a different velocity, it is evident, that the mere presence of a body may produce in a second body, according to the difference of their positions and relative magnitudes, a variety of states, that, when all the varieties of direction, and all the varieties of velocity are estimated together, may be considered as infinite,—equal at least in number to the different states of which the mind is susceptible, in its almost infinite variety of feelings; and all this without any essential change that can affect the identity of the quiescent or moving body, or any essential change that can affect the identity of the mind.

After the very full examination of the general objection to the identity of the mind drawn from the contrast of momentary feelings—an objection founded on the supposed incompatibility of diversity of any kind with strict and absolute identity—it is unnecessary to dwell at any length on the other objection, drawn from changes of general character, in the same individual, at different periods of life, or in different circumstances of fortune; since precisely the same arguments, from the general analogy of nature, which disprove the supposed incompatibility in the one case, disprove it also in the other. Even matter itself, we have seen, may, without the slightest alteration of its identity, exist in an almost infinite variety of states; having, in some of these states, qualities precisely the reverse of those which it exhibited in other states, attracting what it repelled, repelling what it attracted;—and it surely is not more wonderful, that the same identical mind, also, should, in relation to the same objects, in different circumstances, be susceptible of an almost infinite variety of affections,—approving, disapproving, choosing, repenting.

When we observe, in a mind, which we have long known and valued, any marks of altered character,—when, for example, in one, who, by the favour, or rather by the cruelty of Fortune has been raised, from a situation comparatively humble, to sudden distinctions of power and opu-

lence, we see the neglect of all those virtues, the wider opportunity of exercising which seemed to him formerly the chief, or even the only advantage that rendered such distinctions desirable,—the same frivolous vanity, which before appeared to him ridiculous in others, and the same contemptuous insolence of pride, which before appeared to him contemptible,—a craving and impatient desire of greater wealth, merely because he has no longer any use to make of it, unless, indeed that it has become more necessary to his avarice, than it ever was before to his want,—and a gay and scornful indifference to miseries, that are still sometimes able to force themselves upon his view, the relief of which, that once seemed to him so glorious a privilege, would now not require of him even the scanty merit of sacrificing a single superfluity ;—when we perceive this contrast, and almost say within ourselves, Is this the same being ? we should remember, that the influence of fortune is not confined to the mere trappings, which it gives or takes away,—that it operates within as much as without,—and that, accordingly, in the case now imagined by us, the new external circumstances have been gradually modifying the mind, in the same manner, as new external circumstances of a different kind modify the bodies, which happen to be placed in them,—not affecting their identity, but altering their state ; and that, if we could distinguish, as accurately, the series of changes which take place in mind, as we can distinguish those which take place in matter, we should not be more astonished, that, in circumstances of rare and unhappy occurrence, a disposition once apparently generous is generous no more, than we are to observe a body, attracted to another body, at one distance, and afterwards repelled from it, in consequence merely of a change of their mutual position,—a change so very slight, as to be altogether undistinguishable by our senses.

Thus we have seen, that the belief of our mental identity arises, not from any inference of reasoning, but from a principle of intuitive assent, operating universally, immediately, irresistibly, and therefore justly to be regarded, as essential to our constitution,—a principle exactly of the same kind, as those, to which reasoning itself must ultimately be traced, and from which alone its consecutive series of propositions can derive any authority. In addition to this positive evidence of our identity, we have seen, that the strongest objections which we could imagine to be urged against it, are, as might have been expected, *sophistical*, in the false test of identity which they assume,—that the contrasts of momentary feeling, and even the more permanent alterations of general character, in the same individual, afford no valid argument against it ; since, not in mind

only, but in matter also (from a superficial and partial view of the phenomena of which the supposed objections are derived), the most complete identity of substance, without addition of any thing, or subtraction of any thing, is compatible with an infinite diversity of states.

In these remarks, on the nature of our varied consciousness, and on the unity and identity of the mind in all its varieties,—we have considered the mental phenomena in their general aspect. We have now to consider them as arranged in kindred classes,—or rather to attempt the difficult task of the classification itself.





## PART II.

### OF THE EXTERNAL AFFECTIONS OF THE MIND.

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#### CHAPTER I.

##### CLASSIFICATION OF THE PHENOMENA OF MIND.—OF THE LESS DEFINITE EXTERNAL AFFECTIONS.

##### SECTION I.

AFTER considering the Phenomena of the Mind *in general*, we are now to proceed to consider them in the *separate classes* in which they may be arranged. The phenomena themselves, indeed, are almost infinite, and it might seem, on first reflection, a very hopeless task, to attempt to reduce under a few heads the innumerable feelings, which diversify almost every moment of our life. But to those, who are acquainted with the wonders which classification has performed in the other sciences, the task, difficult as it is, will still seem not absolutely hopeless; though in one respect its difficulty will be more highly estimated by them, than by others;—since they only, who know the advantage of the fixed and definite nature of the objects of classification in other sciences, can feel how much greater the obstacles must be, to any accurate arrangement, in a science, of which the objects are indefinite and complex, incapable of being fixed for a moment in the same state, and destroyed by the very effort to grasp them.

The classes which we form, in the mental as well as in the material universe, depend on certain relations which we discover in the phenomena; and the relations according to which objects may be arranged, are of course various, as they are considered by different individuals in different points of view. Some of these relations present themselves immediately, as if to our very glance; others are discoverable only after attentive reflection;—and though the former, merely as presenting themselves more readily, may seem, on that account, better suited for the general purpose of arrangement, it is not the less

true that the classification, which approaches nearest to perfection, is far from being always that which is founded on relations, that seem at first sight the most obvious. The rudest wanderer in the fields may imagine, that the profusion of blossoms around him,—in the greater number of which he is able, himself, to discover many striking resemblances,—may be reduced into some order of arrangement. But he would be little aware, that the principle according to which they are now universally classed, has relation, not to the parts which appear to him to constitute the whole flower, but to some small part of the blossom, which he does not perceive at the distance at which he passes it, and which scarcely attracts his eye when he plucks it from the stem.

To our *mental* classifications the remark is equally applicable. In these too, the most obvious distinctions are not always those which answer best the purposes of systematic arrangement. The phenomena of the mind, are only the mind itself existing in certain states; and, as many of these states are in their nature agreeable, and others disagreeable, this difference, which is to the sentient being himself the most important of all differences, may be supposed to afford the most obvious principle of classification. What is pleasant, what is painful, are perhaps the first classes, which the infant has formed long before he is capable of distinguishing them by a name; and the very imbecility of idiotism itself, to which nothing is true or false, or right or wrong,—and to which there is no future, beyond the succeeding moment,—is yet capable of making this primary distinction, and of regulating, according to it, its momentary desires. The distribution, which we should be inclined to make, of our mental phenomena, according to this obvious principle, would be into those which are pleasing, those which are painful, and those which are neither painful nor pleasing. But, however obvious this first distinction may seem, as a principle of arrangement, the circumstances, on which the differences depend, are so very indefinite, that the distinction,—though it may be useful to have it in view, in its most striking and permanent cases,—cannot be adopted, as the basis of any regular system. To take the mere pleasures and pains of *sense*, for example,—to what intelligible division could we reduce these, which are not merely fugitive in themselves, but vary, from pain to pleasure, and from pleasure to pain, with a change of their external objects, so slight often, as to be scarcely appreciable, and, in many cases, even when the external objects have continued exactly the same? How small, and how variable a boundary separates the warmth which is pleasing from the heat which pains!

A certain quantity of light is grateful to the eye. Increase it;—it becomes, not indifferent,—though that would be a less change,—but absolutely painful; and, if the eye be inflamed, even the small quantity of light,—which was agreeable before, and which seemed, therefore, to admit of being very safely classed among the sources of pleasure,—is now converted into a source of agony. Since it is impossible, therefore, to fix the limits of pain and pleasure, and every affection or state of mind, agreeable, disagreeable, or indifferent, may, by a very trifling change of circumstance, be converted into an opposite state, it is evident, that any division, founded on this vague and transient distinction, must perplex and mislead us, in our attempts to systematize the almost infinite diversities of thought and feeling, rather than give us any aid in the arrangement.

The great leading division of the mental phenomena which has met with most general adoption by philosophers, is into those which belong to the *understanding*, and those which belong to the *will*;—a division which is very ancient, but, though sanctioned by the approbation of many ages, very illogical; since the will, which, in this division, is nominally opposed to the intellect, is so far from being opposed to it in reality, that, even by the assertors of its diversity, it is considered as exercising, in the intellectual department, an empire almost as wide, as in the department allotted to itself. We reason, and plan, and invent, at least as *voluntarily*, as we esteem, or hate, or hope, or fear. How many emotions are there, too, which cannot, without absolute torture, be forced into either division! To take only a few instances, out of many,—to what class are we to reduce grief, joy, admiration, astonishment, which perhaps are not phenomena of the mere understanding, and which,—though they may lead indirectly to desires or volitions,—have nothing, in themselves, that is voluntary, or that can be considered as in any peculiar degree connected with the will? The division of the mental phenomena, into those which belong to the *understanding*, and those which belong the *will*, seems, therefore, to be as faulty, as would be the division of animals into those which have legs and those which have wings; since the same animals might have both legs and wings, and since whole tribes of animals have neither one nor the other.

Another division of the phenomena of mind, similar to the former, and of equal antiquity, since it corresponds with the very ancient division of philosophy into the contemplative and the active, is into those which belong to the *intellectual powers* and those which belong to the *active*

*powers.* This division of the mental phenomena, however, as referable to the intellectual and the active powers of the mind,—though it has the sanction of very eminent names, appears to be faulty, exactly in the same manner as the former, which, indeed, it may be considered almost as representing, under a change of name. Its parts are not opposed to each other, and it does not include all the phenomena which it should include. Is mere grief, for example, or mere astonishment, to be referred to our intellectual or to our active powers? And, in whatsoever manner we may define the term *active*, is the mind more active, when it merely desires good and fears evil, when it looks with esteem on virtue, and with indignation, or disgust, and contempt on vice, than when it pursues a continued train of reasoning, or fancy, or historical investigation?

So little are the intellectual powers opposed to the active, that it is only when some intellectual energy co-exists with desire, that the mind is said to be active, even by those who are unaccustomed to analytical inquiries, or to metaphysical nomenclature. The love of power, or the love of glory, when there is no opportunity of intellectual exertion, may, in the common acceptation of the word, be as passive as tranquillity itself. The passion is active only when, with intellectual action, it compares means with ends, and different means with each other, and deliberates, and resolves, and executes. Chain some revolutionary usurper to the floor of a dungeon, his ambition may be active still, because he may still be intellectually busy in planning means of deliverance and vengeance; and, on his bed of straw, may conquer half the world. But, if we could fetter his reason and fancy, as we can fetter his limbs, what activity would remain, though he were still to feel that mere desire of power or glory, which, though usually followed by intellectual exertion, is itself, as prior to these exertions, all that constitutes ambition, as a passion? There would, indeed, still be in his mind the awful elements of that force, which bursts upon the world with conflagration and destruction; but, though there would be the thunder, it would be the thunder sleeping in its cloud. To *wish* is to *act* with desire; and, unless in the production of mere muscular motion, it is only *intellectually* that we can act. To class the active powers, therefore, as distinct from the intellectual, is to class them, as opposed to that, without which, as active powers, they cannot even exist.

If, then, the arrangement of the mental phenomena, as belonging to two classes of powers, the intellectual and the active, be at once in-

complete, and not accurate, even to the extent to which it reaches, it may be worth while to try at least some other division, even though there should not be any very great hope of success.

The mind is formed susceptible of certain affections. These states or affections we may generalize more or less; and according to our generalization, may give them more or fewer names. But whatever may be the extent of our vocabulary, the mind itself,—as independent of these transient designations, as He who fixed its constitution,—still continues to exhibit the same unaltered susceptibilities, which it originally received; as the flowers, which the same divine Author formed, spring up in the same manner, observing the same seasons, and spreading to the sun the same foliage and blossoms, whatever be the system and the corresponding nomenclature according to which botanists may have agreed to rank and name their tribes. The great Preserver of nature has not trusted us with the dangerous power of altering a single physical law which He has established, though He has given us unlimited power over the *language* which is of our own creation. It is still with us, as it was with our common sire in the original birthplace of our race. The Almighty presents to us all the objects that surround us, wherever we turn our view; but He presents them to us, only that we may give them names. Their powers and susceptibilities they already possess, and we cannot alter these, even as they exist in a single atom.

It may, perhaps, seem absurd, even to suppose, that we should think ourselves able to change, by a few generic words, the properties of the substances which we have classed; and if the question were put to us, as to this effect of our language, in any particular case, there can be no doubt that we should answer in the negative, and express astonishment that such a question should have been put. It requires, however, only a very little reflection on what has passed in our own minds, to discover, that, when we have given a *name* to any quality, that quality acquires immediately, in our imagination, a comparative importance, very different from what it had before; and though nature in itself be truly unchanged, it is ever after, relatively to our conception, different. A difference of words is, in this case, more than a mere verbal difference. Though it be not the expression of a difference of doctrine, it very speedily becomes so. Hence it is, that the same warfare, which the rivalries of individual ambition, or the opposite interests, or supposed opposite interests, of nations have produced, in the great theatre of civil history, have been produced in the small but

timultuous field of science, by the supposed incompatibility of a few abstract terms ; and, indeed, as has been truly said, the sects of philosophers have combated, with more persevering violence, to settle what they mean by the constitution of the world, than all the conquerors of the world have done to render themselves its masters.

Still more absurd would it be to suppose that any classification of the states or affections of the mind, as referable to certain powers or susceptibilities, makes these powers any thing different and separate from the mind itself, as originally and essentially susceptible of the various modifications of which these powers are only a shorter name. And yet what innumerable controversies in philosophy have arisen, and are still frequently arising, from this very mistake, strange and absurd as the mistake may seem. No sooner, for example, were certain affections of the mind classed together, as belonging to the *will*, and certain others, as belonging to the *understanding*,—that is to say, no sooner was the mind, existing in certain states, denominated the *understanding*, and in certain other states denominated the *will*,—than the *understanding* and the *will* ceased to be considered as the same individual substance, and became immediately, as it were, two opposite and contending powers, in the empire of mind, as distinct as any two sovereigns, with their separate nations under their control ; and it became an object of as fierce contention to determine whether certain affections of the mind belonged to the *understanding*, or the *will*, as, in the management of political affairs, to determine, whether a disputed province belonged to one potentate or to another. Every new diversity of the faculties of the mind, indeed, converted each faculty into a little independent mind,—as if the original mind were like that wonderful animal, of which naturalists tell us, that may be cut into an almost infinite number of parts, each of which becomes a polypus, as perfect as that from which it was separated. The only difference is, that those who make us acquainted with this wonderful property of the polypus, acknowledge the divisibility of the parent animal ; while those who assert the spiritual multiplicity, are at the same time assertors of the absolute indivisibility of that which they divide.

Let us now endeavour to form some classification of the mental phenomena, without considering whether our arrangement be similar or dissimilar to that of others. In short, let us forget, as much as possible, that any prior arrangements have been made, and think of the phenomena only.

When we consider, then, the various states or affections of the mind, which form this series, one circumstance of difference must strike us, that some of them arise immediately, in consequence of *the presence of external objects*,—and some, as immediately, in consequence of certain *preceding affections of the mind itself*. The one set, therefore, are obviously the result of the laws both of matter and of mind,—implying, in external objects, a power of affecting the mind, as well as, in the mind, a susceptibility of being affected by them. The other set result from the susceptibilities of the mind itself, which has been formed by its divine Author to exist in certain states, and to exist in these in a certain relative order of succession. The affections of the one class arise, because some external object is present;—the affections of the other class arise, because some previous change in the states of the mind has taken place.

To illustrate this distinction by example, let us suppose ourselves, in walking across a lawn, to turn our eyes to a particular point, and to perceive there an *oak*. That is to say, the presence of the oak, or rather of the light reflected from it, occasions a certain new state of the mind, which we call a sensation of *vision*,—an affection, which belongs to the mind, alone, indeed, but of which we have every reason to suppose that the mind, of itself, without the presence of light, would not have been the subject. The peculiar sensation, therefore, is the result of the presence of the light reflected from the oak; and we perceive it, because the mind is capable of being affected by external things. But this affection of the mind, which has an external object for its immediate cause, is not the only mental change which takes place. Other changes succeed it, without any other external impression. We compare the oak with some other tree which we have seen before, and we are struck with its superior magnificence and beauty;—we imagine how some scene more familiar to us would appear, if it were adorned with this tree, and how the scene before us would appear, if it were stripped of it;—we think of the number of years, which must have passed since the oak was an acorn;—and we moralize, perhaps, on the changes, which have taken place, in the little history of ourselves and our friends, and, still more, on the revolutions of kingdoms, and the birth and decay of a whole generation of mankind,—while it has been silently and regularly advancing to maturity, through the sunshine and the storm. Of all the variety of states of the mind, which these processes of thought involve, the only one, which can be ascribed to an external object as its direct cause, is the primary percep-



tion of the oak ; the rest have been the result, not immediately of any thing external, but of preceding states of the mind ;—that particular mental state, which constituted the perception of the oak, being followed immediately by that different state, which constituted the remembrance of some tree observed before, and this by that different state which constituted the comparison of the two ; and so successively, through all the different processes of thought enumerated.

The first stage of our generalization, then, has been the reduction of all the mental phenomena to two definite classes, according as the *causes*, or *immediate antecedents*, of our feelings are themselves *material* or *mental*. Our next stage must be the still further reduction of these, by some new generalizations of the phenomena of each class.

The former of these classes,—that of our external affections of the mind,—is, indeed, so very simple, as to require but little subdivision. The other class, however,—that of the internal affections or states of the mind,—comprehends so large a proportion of the mental phenomena, and these so various, that, without many subdivisions, it would be itself of little aid to us in our arrangement.

The first great subdivision, then, which I would form, of the internal class, is into our *intellectual states of mind* and our *emotions*. The latter of these classes comprehends all, or nearly all, the mental states which have been classed by others under the head of *active powers*. The term *emotions*, however, is preferred, partly, to avoid the phrase *active powers*,—which appears awkward and ambiguous, as opposed to other powers, which are not said to be passive ; and partly, because our intellectual states or energies,—far from being opposed to our active powers,—are, as we have seen, essential elements of their activity,—so essential, that without them, these never would have had the name of *active* ; and because I wish to comprehend, under the term, various states of the mind, which cannot with propriety, in any case, be termed *active*,—such as grief, joy, astonishment,—and others which have been commonly, though, I think, inaccurately, ascribed to the *intellectual* faculties,—such as the feelings of beauty and sublimity,—feelings which are certainly much more analogous to our other emotions,—to our feelings of love or awe, for example,—than to our mere remembrances or reasonings, or to any other states of mind, which can strictly be called intellectual.

The exact meaning of the term *emotion*, it is difficult to state in any form of words,—for the same reason which makes it difficult, or rather impossible, to explain what we mean by the term *thought*, or the terms

*sweetness* or *bitterness*. What can be more opposite than pleasure and pain ! the real distinction of which is evidently familiar, not to man only, but to every thing that lives ; and yet if we were to attempt to show in what their difference consists, or to give a verbal definition of either, we should find the task to be no easy one. All of them, indeed, agree in this respect, that they imply peculiar vividness of feeling, with this important circumstance, to distinguish them from the vivid pleasures and pains of sense,—that they do not arise immediately from the presence of external objects, but *subsequently* to the primary feelings, which we term *sensations* or *perceptions*. Perhaps if any definition of them be possible, they may be defined to be *vivid feelings* arising immediately from the consideration of objects perceived, or remembered, or imagined, or from other prior emotions. In some cases,—as in that of the emotion which beauty excites,—they may succeed so rapidly to the primary perception, as almost to form a part of it. Yet we find no great difficulty of analysis, in separating the pleasing effect of beauty, from the perception of the mere form and colour, and can very readily imagine the same accurate perception of these, without the feeling of beauty, as we can imagine the same feeling of beauty to accompany the perception of forms and colours very different.

Our emotions, then, even in the cases in which they seem most directly to co-exist with perception, are still easily distinguishable from it, and, in like manner, when they arise from the intellectual states of memory, imagination, comparison, they are equally distinguishable from what we remember, or imagine, or compare. They form truly a separate order of the internal affections of the mind,—as distinct from the intellectual phenomena, as the class, to which they both belong, is distinguishable from the class of external affections, that arise immediately from the presence of objects without.

## SECTION II.

It must not be conceived, however, that, in dividing the class of internal affections of the mind, into the two distinct orders of intellectual states, and emotions ; and, in speaking of our emotions as subsequent in their origin, we would imply that these never are combined, at the same moment, in that sense of combination, as applied to the mind, which already has been sufficiently explained. On the contrary, they very frequently concur ; but, in all cases in which they do concur, it is easy

for us to distinguish them by reflective analysis. The emotion of *pity*, for example, may continue in the mind, while we are intellectually planning means of relief for the sufferers who occasioned it ; but, though the pity and the reasoning co-exist, we have little difficulty in separating them in our reflection. It is the same with all our vivid desires, which not merely lead to action, but accompany it. The sage, who in the silence of midnight, continues still those labours which the morning began, watching, with sleepless eye, the fate of some experiment, that almost promises to place within his hand the invisible thread which leads into the labyrinths of nature, or exploring those secrets of the mind itself, by the aid of which he is afterwards to lay down rules of more accurate philosophizing, and to become the legislator of all who think, is not cheered, in his toils, merely by occasional anticipations of the truths that await his search. The pleasure of future discovery is, as it were, a constant light, that shines upon him and warms him ; and, in the very moments in which he watches, and calculates, and arranges, there are other principles of his nature in as lively exercise as his powers of observation and reasoning. The warrior, at the head of an array, which he has often led from victory to victory, and which he is leading again to new fields of conflict, does not think of glory only in the intervals of meditation or action. The passion which he obeys, is not a mere inspiring genius, that occasionally descends to rouse or invigorate. It is the *soul* of his continued existence,—it marches with him, from station to station,—it deliberates with him in his tent,—it conquers with him in the field,—it thinks of new successes, in the very moment of vanquishing ; and, even at night, when his body has yielded at last to the influence of that fatigue, of which it was scarcely conscious while there was room for any new exertion by which fatigue could be increased, and when all the anxieties of military command are slumbering with it, the passion that animates him, more active still, does not quit him as he rests, but is wakeful in his very sleep, bringing before him dreams, that almost renew the tumults and the toils of the day. Our emotions, then, may co-exist with various sensations, remembrances, reasonings,—in the same manner as these feelings, sensitive or intellectual, may variously co-exist with each other. But we do not think it less necessary to class our sensations of vision as different from our sensations of smell, and our comparison as itself different from the separate sensations compared, because we may, at the same moment, both see and smell a rose, and may endeavour to appreciate the relative amount of pleasure which that beautiful flower thus doubly affords.

In like manner, our intellectual states of mind, and our emotions, are not the less to be considered as distinct classes, because any vivid passion may continue to exist together with those intellectual processes of thought, which it originally prompted, and which, after prompting, it prolongs.

In all these cases, however, in which an emotion co-exists with the results of other external or internal influences, it is still easy to distinguish its subsequence to the feelings that preceded it. Pity, for example, as in the case to which I have before alluded, may co-exist with a long train of thoughts, that are busily occupied in endeavouring to relieve most effectually the misery which is pitied; but the misery must have been itself an object of our thought, before the state of mind which constitutes pity, could have been induced. The emotion which we feel on the contemplation of beauty, may continue to co-exist with our mere perception of the forms and colours of bodies; but these forms and colours must have been perceived by us, before the delightful emotion could have been originally felt. In short, our emotions, though like the warmth and radiance, which seem to accompany the very presence of the sun, rather than to flow from it,—they may seem in many cases to be a part of the very feelings which excite them, are yet, in every instance, as truly secondary to these feelings, as the light which beams on us, on the surface of our earth, is subsequent to the rising of the great orb of day.

As yet, we have advanced but a short way, in our generalization of the mental phenomena; though, as far as we have advanced, our division seems sufficiently distinct and comprehensive. The mind is susceptible of certain existing affections, of certain intellectual modifications which arise from these, and of certain emotions which arise from both; that is to say, it is capable of existing in certain states, the varieties of which correspond with these particular designations. We *see*, we *remember*, or *compare*, what we have seen, *regard* what we see, or remember, or compare, with *desire* or with *aversion*; and of these, or of states analogous to these, the whole of life, sensitive, intellectual, or moral, is composed. Every minute, therefore, of every hour, in all its variety of occupation, is but a portion of this complicated tissue. Let us suppose ourselves, for example, looking down from an eminence, on the prospect beneath.—On one side all is desolation,—and we see perhaps, at a little distance, some half roofless hovel, as miserable as the waste immediately around it, which has scarcely the appearance of a dwelling for any living thing, but seems rather as if Nature herself had originally placed it there, as a part of the general sterility and ruggedness.

On the other side, all is plenty and magnificence ;—and we see, amid lawns and wooded banks, a mansion as different in aspect, as if the beings that inhabited it were of a different race,—which, as a part of the scene where it is placed, accords so harmoniously with the whole, that, without it, the scene itself would appear incomplete, and almost incongruous, as if stripped of some essential charm. To view these separate dwellings, and all the objects around them,—if no other feeling arose,—would be to have a series of external or sensitive affections only. But it is scarcely possible for us to view them, without the instant rise of those intellectual states of mind which constitute comparison, and of those affections of another order, which constitute the emotions of admiration and desire in the one case, and in the other the emotions that are opposite to admiration and desire, together, perhaps, with some of those bitter emotions which the sight of misery makes in every breast that is not unworthy of so sacred an influence.

In this example, our intellectual states of mind, and our emotions, have for their objects things really existing without ; but the external affections of our senses, though the most permanent, and usually the most vivid, and therefore the best remembered, of all the sources of our internal feelings, are far from being necessary, in every instance, to the production of these. There is a constant, or almost constant succession of internal affections of mind, of thoughts, and emotions, following thoughts and emotions, which, even though we were to be rendered incapable of a single new sensation,—if our animal life could in these circumstances be long protracted,—would still preserve to us also that intellectual and moral existence, which is the only life, that is worthy of the name. The knowledge which we acquire from without, lives in us within ; and, in such a case as that now imagined, our memory would be to us in some measure every sense which we had lost, creating to us again that very world which had vanished before us. If we could compare and love or hate only things actually present, we should be far from the maturity and perfection of an infant's mind, and should scarcely be advanced to the rank of idiocy, which, limited as it is in its range, still comprehends in its little sphere of foresight and memory, some few moments at least of the past, and even a moment or two of the future. It is with the future and with the past, that, intellectually and morally, we are chiefly conversant. To these high capacities of our being, the subjects, which can exercise our powers and feelings, however distant in time or place, are as it were *everlastingly present*,—like that mysterious eternal *now*, of which theo-

logians speak,—in which past, present, and future are considered, as, in every moment of every age, alike visible to the omniscient glance of the Divinity. We love the virtues of which we read, with the same sort of emotion, with which we love the virtues that are mingling with us in the present hour. The patriot of the most remote age,—of whom we know nothing, but the historical tale of his voluntary perils or sufferings in some generous cause,—is like the friend of our familiar intercourse; and the sacrifices, that wrought the happiness of millions of beings, who are now not merely unknown to us, but of whom not a single name is remembered on the earth, awake a sort of veneration, that is almost combined with gratitude, as if we were in the presence of a personal deliverer. It is the same with absolute unreality, nor merely with that which no longer exists, but with that which never had existence. We are struck with the beauty of what we only imagine, in the same manner, though perhaps not with the same liveliness of feeling, as we are struck with the beauty of external things. Our emotions then, however dependent they may have been originally, are now no longer dependent on these external things. They may arise from memory or imagination, as readily as from perception; but when they arise from memory or imagination, they are as truly distinguishable from what we remember and imagine, as they are distinguishable from our perceptions of mere forms and colours, and other sensible qualities, when they arise from what we perceive.

According to this division, therefore, of the mental phenomena, into those which are of external and those which are of internal origin, and the subdivision which we have made of this latter class, I shall proceed to consider, first, The external powers or susceptibilities of the mind; secondly, The intellectual powers or susceptibilities of the mind; and, thirdly, Its susceptibilities of emotion,—beginning with that class, which we have every reason to suppose to be first in the actual order of developement,—the powers or susceptibilities of the mind, in its immediate relation to its own bodily organs.

Certain states of our bodily organs are directly followed by certain states or affections of our mind;—certain states or affections of our mind are directly followed by certain states of our bodily organs. The nerve of sight, for example, is affected in a certain manner; vision, which is an affection or state of the mind, is its consequence. I will to move my hand; the hand obeys my will, so rapidly, that the motion, though truly subsequent, seems almost to accompany my volition, rather than to follow it. In conformity with the definitions before given

of power and susceptibility, the one as implying a reference to something consequent, the other a reference to something antecedent, I should be inclined to consider the sensation which follows the presence of an external object as indicating a mental susceptibility of being so affected;—the production of muscular motion by the will, as indicating a mental power.

In considering the susceptibilities of the mind, I comprehend, under its external affections, all those phenomena or states of the mind, which are commonly termed *sensations*; together with all our internal organic feelings of pleasure or pain, that arise from states of the nervous system, as much as our other sensations. Many of these are commonly ranked under another head, that of *appetites*,—such as hunger, thirst, the desire of repose, or of change of muscular position, which arises from long-continued exertion; the oppressive anxiety, which arises from impeded respiration, and various other diseases arising from bodily uneasiness. But these appetites evidently admit of being analyzed into two distinct elements,—a pain of a peculiar species, and a subsequent desire of that which is to relieve the pain,—states of mind, of which one may immediately succeed the other; but which are, unquestionably, as different in themselves, as if no such succession took place,—as different as the pleasure of music is from the mere desire of enjoying it again, or as the pain of excessive heat, in burning, from the subsequent desire of coolness. The pain, which is one element of the appetite, is an *external* affection of the mind, to be classed with our other sensations,—the succeeding desire, which is another element of it, is an *internal* affection of the mind, to be classed with our other emotions of desire. We might have felt the same pain of hunger, though we had not been aware that it arose from want of food, and consequently could not have felt any desire of food, but merely the general desire of relief which attends every disagreeable sensation. We might have felt the same uneasiness, which we term thirst, though we had not been aware, that it would be relieved by a draught of any beverage,—and the same pain of impeded respiration or fatigue, though nature had not led us instinctively, in the one case to perform the muscular actions necessary for expiration and inspiration; in the other to change our posture, and thus give repose to the wearied limbs. Whatever be the organic states, which occasion these painful feelings, that are elementary in our appetites, there can be no doubt that some organic affections precede them, as truly as some affection of an external organ precedes the pain of a burn, or the painful temporary blind-

ness, when we are dazzled with excessive light. And though, in the case of the appetite, we may give the same name to the pain, and to the desire of that which is to relieve the pain ; or rather, may give one name to the combination of the two feelings,—which is not to be wondered at, where the two feelings are so universally and so immediately successive,—this error, or rather this mere abbreviation of language, is no reason that we should consider the elementary pain itself, as different in kind from our other pains, that have not merely half a term to express them, but a whole undivided word of their own. The pain, of which the appetite desires the relief, is a *sensation*, as much as any other internal bodily pain which we feel,—a state or affection of the mind, arising immediately and solely from a state or affection of the body,—which is the only definition that can be given of a sensation.

That the various species of *uneasiness*, which are elementary parts of our appetites, recur at intervals in which there is some degree of regularity, does not alter their nature, when they do recur, so as to render a peculiar arrangement necessary for including them. The mental states, which constitute the uneasiness that is felt, recur thus at intervals, not from any thing peculiar in the mind itself, the phenomena of which alone we are considering, but because the body is only at intervals in the state, which precedes or induces those peculiar mental affections. If, instead of the two or three periods, at which the appetite of hunger recurs, the nervous system were, one hundred times in the day, at intervals the most irregular, in that state which is immediately followed by the feeling of hunger, the painful feeling,—and the consequent desire of food, which has been found to relieve it,—would of course be felt one hundred times in the day. The regularity, therefore, of the recurrence of this state of the nerves, is a phenomenon, which belongs to the consideration of the physiologist of the body, not of the physiologist of the mind, whose immediate office is finished, when he can trace any particular feeling of the mind to some affection of our organic frame, as its invariable antecedent ; and who knowing, therefore, that the feeling of pain, in any of our appetites, is the effect or result of some organic affection, is not surprised that it should not recur, when that organic affection has not previously taken place,—any more than he is surprised that we do not enjoy the fragrance of roses or violets, when there are no particles of odour to be inhaled by us ; or do not listen to songs and choral harmonies, when there is no vibration to be transmitted to the auditory nerve.



Since the mere pains of appetite, however, most important as they truly are, for the ends which they immediately answer, are yet of little importance in relation to our general knowledge, it is unnecessary to dwell on them at length. But I cannot quit the consideration of them, without remarking that admirable provision which the gracious Author of nature has made by them, for the preservation not of our *being* merely, but of our *well-being*—of that health and vigour, without which, a frail and feverish existence, at least in its relation to this earthly scene, would be of little value.

“Though a man knew,” says Dr Reid, “that his life must be supported by *eating*, reason could not direct him when to eat, or what; how much, or how often. In all these things, appetite is a much better guide than reason. Were reason only to direct us in this matter, its calm voice would often be drowned in the hurry of business or the charms of amusement. But the voice of appetite rises gradually, and, at last becomes loud enough to call off our attention from any other employment.” \*

If indeed, the necessary supply were long neglected, the morbid state of the body which would ensue, though no pain of actual hunger were to be felt, would convince, at last, the sufferer of his folly. But the providence of our gracious Creator, has not trusted the existence of man to the dangerous admonition of so rough a monitor, which might, perhaps, bring his folly before him only when it was too late to be wise. The pain of hunger—that short disease, if it may be so termed, which it is in our power so speedily to cure, prevents diseases that more truly deserve the name. Between satiety on one side, and want on the other, the stream of health flows tranquilly along, which, but for these boundaries, would speedily waste itself and disappear; as the most magnificent river, which if dispersed over a boundless plain would flow almost into nothing, owes its abundance and majestic beauty to the very banks that seem to confine its waters within too narrow a channel.

Besides those particular feelings of bodily uneasiness, which, as attended with desire, constitute our appetites, there are other affections of the same class, which, though not usually ranked with our external sensations or perceptions, because we find it difficult to ascribe them to any local organ, are unquestionably to be arranged under the same head; since they are feelings which arise as immediately and directly from a certain state of a part of the nervous system, as any of the feel-

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\* On the Active Powers, Essay III. c. 1.

ings which we more commonly ascribe to external sense. Of this kind is that muscular pleasure of alacrity and action, which forms so great a part of the delight of the young of every species of living beings, and which is felt, though in a less degree, at every period of life, even the most advanced; or which, when it ceases in age, only gives place to another species of muscular pleasure—that which constitutes the pleasure of ease—the same species of feeling, which doubles to every one the delight of exercise, by sweetening the repose to which it leads, and thus making it indirectly, as well as directly, a source of enjoyment.

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## CHAPTER II.

### OF THE MORE DEFINITE EXTERNAL AFFECTIONS OF MIND IN GENERAL.

We have now to proceed to that widest and most important order of our external affections, which comprehends the feelings more commonly termed *sensations*, and universally ascribed to particular organs of sense. In these, we find the rude elements of all our knowledge, the materials on which the mind is ever operating, and without which, it seems to us almost impossible to conceive that it could ever have operated at all, or could even, in its absolute inactivity, have been conscious of its own inert existence.

This order of our external feelings comprehends all those states of mind, however various they may be, which immediately succeed the changes of state, produced, in any of our organs of sense, by the presence of certain external bodies. The mental affections are themselves commonly termed *sensations*; but we have no verb, in our language, which exactly denotes what is expressed in the substantive noun. To *feel* is, in its two senses, either much more limited or much more general, being confined, in its restricted meaning, to the sensations of one organ, that of touch,—and as a more general word, being applicable to all the varieties of our consciousness, as much as to those particular varieties, which are immediately successive to the affections of our organs of sense. We are said, in this wider use of the term, to feel indignation, love, surprise, as readily as we are said to feel the warmth of a fire, or the coldness of snow.

In defining our sensations, to be those mental affections, which are immediately successive to certain organic affections, produced by the

action of external things, it is very evident, that I have made two assumptions,—first of the existence of external things, that affect our organs of sense ; and, secondly of organs of sense, that are affected by external things ;—unless, indeed, the assumption of the existence of organs of sense be considered—as in philosophic truth it unquestionably is—only another form of the assumption of the existence of external things, since, in relation to the sentient mind, the organs thus supposed to exist, are, in strictness of language, *external*, as much as the objects supposed to act upon them. All of which we are truly conscious in sensation, is the mental affection, the last link of the series in the supposed process ; what we term our perceptions of organs of sense, or of other external things that act upon these—our ideas, for example, of a brain or an eye, a house or a mountain, being as truly states of our own percipient mind, and nothing but states of our own mind, as our feeling of joy or sorrow, hope or fear, love or hate,—to which we never think of giving an existence, nor a direct and immediate cause of existence, out of ourselves. By the very constitution of our nature, however, or by the influence of associations as irresistible as intuition itself,—it is impossible for us not to feel this essential reality in the causes of one set of our mental affections, in the same manner as it is impossible for us to ascribe it to another set. The brain, the eye, the house, the mountain, we believe, and cannot but believe, to have external existence, independent of our own ; the joy and sorrow, hope and fear, love and hate, we believe, and cannot but believe, to be merely states of our own mind, occasioned by other former states of mind, and dependent, therefore, for their continuance, on our own continued existence only.

In referring to the particular class of sensations, and consequently to an external cause, a certain number only of the affections of our mind, there can be no doubt, that we proceed now, in the mature state of our knowledge, with more accuracy, than we could have attained in that early period of life, when our original feelings were more recent. We have now a clearer and more definite belief of an external world, and of objects of sensations separate from our sensations themselves ; without which general belief, previously obtained, we should as little have ascribed to an external organic cause, many of our feelings which we now ascribe to one,—our sensations of sound and fragrance, for example,—as we now ascribe to such an immediate external cause, our emotions of joy or sorrow. A still more important acquisition, is our knowledge of our own organic frame, by which we are enabled, in a great measure, to verify our sensations,—to produce them, as it were, at

pleasure, when their external objects are before us, and in this way to correct the feelings, which have risen spontaneously, by those which we ourselves produce. Thus, when, in reverie, our conceptions become peculiarly vivid, and the objects of our thought seem almost to exist in our presence; if only we stretch out our hand, or fix our eyes on the forms that are permanently before us, the illusion vanishes. Our organ of touch or of sight is not affected in the same manner, as if the object that charms us in our musing dream were really present; and we class the feeling, therefore, as a conception,—not as a sensation,—which, but for the opportunity of this correction, we should unquestionably, in many instances, have done.

But though, in forming the class of our sensations, we derive many advantages from that full knowledge which the experience of many years has given, we purchase these by disadvantages which are perhaps as great, and which are greater from the very circumstance, that it is absolutely out of our power to estimate their amount. What we consider as the immediate sensation, is not the simple and mental state, as it originally followed that corporeal change, which now precedes it; but, at least in the most striking of all the tribes of our sensations, is a very different one. We have the authority of reason, *a priori*, as showing no peculiar connexion of the points of the retina with one place of bodies more than with another; and we have the authority also of observation, in the celebrated case of a young man, who was couched by Cheselden, and in other cases of the same peculiar species of blindness, in which the eyes, by a surgical operation, have been rendered for the first time capable of distinct vision, that if we had had no organ of sense but that of sight, and no instinctive judgment had been superadded to mere vision, we should not have had the power of distinguishing the magnitude and distant place of objects; a mere expanse of colour being all which we should have perceived, if even colour itself could, in these circumstances, have been perceived by us as expanded. Yet it is sufficient now, that rays of light, precisely the same in number, and in precisely the same direction, as those which, at one period of our life, exhibited to us colour, and colour alone, should fall once more on the same small expanse of nerve, to give us instantly that boundlessness of vision, which, almost as if the fetters of our mortal frame were shaken off, lifts us from our dungeon, and makes us truly citizens, not of the earth only, but of the universe. Simple as the principle may now seem, which distinguishes our secondary or acquired perceptions of vision from those which were primary and immediate,

it was long before the distinction was made ; and till a period which, —if we consider it in relation to those long ages of philosophic inquiry, or rather most unphilosophic argumentation, which had gone before,—may be considered almost as in our own time, longitudinal distance was conceived to be as completely an original object of sight as the varieties of mere colour and brilliancy. There may, therefore,—though we have not yet been able, and may never be able, to discover it,—be a corresponding difference in our other sensations, which now seem to us simple and immediate. In the case of sound, indeed, there is a very evident analogy to these visual acquired perceptions ; since a constant reference to place mingles with our sensations of this class, in the same manner, though not so distinctly, as in our perceptions of sight. We perceive the sound, as it were near or at a distance, in one direction rather than in another ; as, in the case of longitudinal distance in vision, we perceive colour at one distance rather than at another. Yet there is as little reason, from the nature of the organic changes themselves, to suppose, that different affections of our auditory nerves should originally give us different notions of distance, as that such notions should originally be produced by different affections of the retina ; and, as in sight and hearing, so it is far from improbable that, in all our senses, there may, by the reciprocal influence of these upon each other, or by the repeated lessons of individual experience in each, be a similar modification of the original simple feelings, which, in that first stage of existence that opened to us the world and its phenomena, each individual organ separately afforded. Our reasoning with respect to them, therefore, as original organs of sense, may, perhaps, be as false as our chemical reasoning would be, were we to attempt to infer the properties of an uncombined acid or alkali, from our observation of the very different properties of a neutral salt, into the composition of which we know that the acid or the alkali has entered.

If, indeed, it were in our power to be introduced to a society, like that of which Diderot speaks, in his Letter on the Deaf and Dumb, and to hold communication with them, all our doubts on this subject would be removed. “What a strange society,” says he, “would five persons make, each of them endowed with one only of our five different senses ; and no two of the party with the same sense ! There can be no doubt, that differing, as they must differ, in all their views of nature, they would treat each other as madmen, and that each would look upon the others with all due contempt. It is, indeed, only an image of

what is happening every moment in the world ; we have but one sense, and we judge of every thing." \*—"There is, however," he justly remarks, "one science, though but one science, in which the whole society of the different senses might agree,—the science which has relation to the properties of number. They might each arrive, by their separate abstractions, at the sublimest speculations of arithmetic and algebra ; they might fathom the depths of analysis, and propose and resolve problems of the most complicated equations, as if they were all so many Diophantuses. It is perhaps," he adds, "what the oyster is doing in his shell."†

From such a society,—if, indeed, we could hold any communication with these profound algebraists, except in their common science of numbers,—we might undoubtedly learn, what are the direct immediate affections of mind, to which our senses individually give rise, and consequently, how much, while feeling has blended with feeling, they have reciprocally operated on each other. But, in our present circumstances, unaided by intercourse with such living abstractions, it is impossible for us to remove wholly this uncertainty, as to the kind and degree of influence, which experience may have had, in modifying our primary sensations. We may wish, indeed, to be able to distinguish our present feelings, from those which the same objects originally excited ; but, since no memory can go back to the period, at which we did not perceive longitudinal distance, as it were, immediately by the eye, as little, we may suppose, can any memory go back to the period, when other sensations, less interesting than those of vision, were first excited. Could we trace the series of feelings, in a single mind,—as variously modified, in the progress from infancy to maturity,—we should know more of the intellectual and moral nature of man, than is probably ever to be revealed to his inquiry ;—when in ages, as remote from that in which we live, and perhaps as much more enlightened, as our own age may be said to be in relation to the period of original darkness and barbarism, he is still to be searching into his own nature, with the same avidity as now. He must, indeed, be a very dull observer, who has not felt, on looking at an infant, some desire to know the little processes of thought, that are going on in his curious and active mind ; and who, on reflecting on the value, as an attainment in science, which the sagest philosopher would set on the consciousness of those acquisitions which infancy has already made, is not struck with that nearness, in which,

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\* Œuvres, tom. ii. p. 12.

† P. 131.

in some points, extreme knowledge and extreme ignorance may almost be said to meet. What metaphysician is there, however subtle and profound in his analytical inquiries, and however successful in the analyses which he has made, who would not give all his past discovery, and all his hopes of future discovery, for the certainty of knowing with exactness what every infant feels? The full instruction, which such a view of our progressive feelings, from their very origin, in the first sensations of life, would afford, Nature, in her wisdom, however, has not communicated to us,—more than she has communicated to us the nature of that state of being, which awaits the soul after it has finished its career of mortality. Our existence seems, in our conception of it, never to have had a beginning. As far back as we can remember any event, there is always a period, that appears to us still farther back, the events of which we cannot distinguish; as, when we look toward the distant horizon, we see less and less distinctly, in the long line which the sunshine of evening still illuminates, plains, and woods, and streams, and hills, more distant, half melting into air, beyond which our eye can find nothing,—though we are still certain, that other woods, and streams, and plains are there, and that it is only the imperfection in our sight, which seems to bound them as in another world.

The philosophic use of the term *sensation* does not necessarily imply, what, in its popular use, is considered almost as involved in it; and perhaps, therefore, it may not be superfluous to state, that it is not confined to feelings which are pleasurable or painful, but extends to every mental affection, that is the immediate consequence of impression on our organs of sense,—of which mental states or affections, many and, as I am inclined to think, by far the greater number, are of a kind that cannot be termed either agreeable or disagreeable. Of the objects of sight, for example, which are of such very frequent occurrence, how few are there, at which we look, either with pleasure or with pain,—if we except that indirect pleasure, which, in particular cases, they may afford, as communicating to us information that is valuable in itself, or as gratifying even our idlest curiosity. To take one of the most striking cases of this sort,—though we may derive, from the perusal of a work that interests us, the purest delight, it is a delight resulting only from the conceptions, which the author, in consequence of the happy contrivance of symbolic characters, has been able to transfuse, as it were, from his own mind into ours; but, during all the time of the perusal, sensations almost innumerable have been excited in us, by the separate characters with which the pages are covered, that have never

mingled even the faintest direct pleasure, with the general emotion, which they, and they alone, have indirectly produced.

"I apprehend," says Dr. Reid, "that, besides the sensations that are either agreeable or disagreeable, there is still a greater number that are indifferent. To these we give so little attention, that they have no name, and are immediately forgot, as if they had never been; and it requires attention to the operations of our minds, to be convinced of their existence. For this end, we may observe, that, to a good ear, every human voice is distinguishable from all others. Some voices are pleasant, some disagreeable; but the far greater part can neither be said to be one or the other. The same, thing may be said of other sounds, and no less of tastes, smells, and colours; and if we consider, that our senses are in continual exercise while we are awake, that some sensation attends every object they present to us, and that familiar objects seldom raise any emotion, pleasant or painful,—we shall see reason, besides the agreeable and disagreeable, to admit a third class of sensations, that may be called indifferent. The sensations that are indifferent, are far from being useless. They serve as signs, to distinguish things that differ; and the information we have concerning things external, comes by their means. Thus, if a man had no ear to receive pleasure from the harmony or melody of sounds, he would still find the sense of hearing of great utility; though sounds gave him neither pleasure nor pain of themselves, they would give him much useful information; and the like may be said of the sensations we have by all the other senses."\*

It is as signs, indeed, far more than as mere pleasures in themselves, that our sensations are to us of such inestimable value. Even in the case of the symbolic or arbitrary characters of a language, when we consider all the important purposes to which these are subservient, as raising us originally from absolute barbarism, and saving us from relapsing into it, there might be an appearance of paradox, indeed, but there would be perfect truth in asserting, that the sensations which are themselves indifferent, are more precious, even in relation to happiness itself, than the sensations which are themselves accompanied with lively delight, or rather, of which it is the very essence to be delightful. Happiness, though necessarily involving present pleasure, is the direct or indirect, and often the very distant result of feelings of every kind, pleasurable, painful, and indifferent. It is like the beautiful profusion

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\* On the Intellectual Powers, Essay II. c. 16.



of flowers, which adorn our summer fields. In our admiration of the foliage, and the blossoms, and the pure airs and sunshine, in which they seem to live, we almost forget the darkness of the soil in which their roots are spread. Yet how much should we err, if we were to consider them as deriving their chief nutriment from the beams that shine around them, in the warmth and light of which we have wandered with joy. That delightful radiance alone would have been of little efficacy, without the showers, from which, in those very wanderings, we have often sought shelter at noon ; or at least without the dews, which were unheeded by us, as they fell silently and almost insensibly on our evening walk.

With the common division of our sensations into five classes,—those of smell, taste, hearing, sight, touch, we have been familiar, almost from our childhood ; and though the classification may be far from perfect, in reference to our sensations themselves, considered simply as affections of the mind, it is sufficiently accurate, in reference to the mere organs of sense ; for, though our sensations of heat and cold, in one very important respect, which is afterwards to be considered by us, have much less resemblance to the other sensations, which we acquire by our organs of touch, or at least to sensations, which we are generally supposed to derive from that organ, than to sensations which we receive by the medium of other organs, our sensations, of smell and sound for example,—still, as they arise from an affection of the same organ, they may be more conveniently referred to the same, than to any other class ; since, if we quit that obvious line of distinction, which the difference of organs affords, we shall not find it easy to define them by other lines as precise.

But whatever may be the arbitrary division or arrangement which we may form either of our sensations themselves, or of the organs that are previously affected, the susceptibility of the mind by which it is capable of being affected by the changes of state in our mere bodily organs, must be regarded as, in every sense of the word, of primary value in our mental constitution. To the individual, indeed, it may be said to be in itself all the things which are around him, however near or afar ; because it is truly that, by which alone all things near or afar become known to him. It constitutes by this mutual relation, which it establishes, a power of more than magic agency, before which the great gulf, that appeared to separate forever the worlds of matter and of spirit, disappears,—which thus links together substances, that seemed, in their nature, incapable of any common bond of union,—and which, bringing

the whole infinity of things, within the sphere of our own mind, communicates to it some faint semblance of the omnipresence of its Author. "What is that organ,"—says an eloquent French writer, speaking of the eye,—“what is that astonishing organ, in which all objects acquire, by turns a successive existence,—where the spaces, the figures, and the motions, that surround me, are as it were created,—where the stars, that exist at the distance of a hundred millions of leagues, become a part of myself,—and where in a single half inch of diameter, is contained the universe?” This power of external sense, which first awakes us into life, continues, ever after, to watch, as it were, round the life which it awoke, lavishing on us perpetual varieties of instruction and delight; and, if, from the simple pleasures, and simple elementary knowledge which it immediately affords, we trace its influence, through all the successive feelings to which it indirectly gives rise, it may be said to exist, by a sort of intellectual and moral transmutation, in the most refined and ethereal of all our thoughts and emotions.

So much indeed, of human knowledge, and of all that is valuable and delightful in human feeling, involves these elementary sensations, as it were in the very essence of the thoughts and feelings themselves, that one of the most acute of modern French metaphysicians, and with scarcely an exception, all the philosophers of the French metaphysical school, who are his followers, have considered the whole variety of human consciousness, as mere sensations variously transformed; though, in stating the nature of this transformation, and the difference of the sensations as transformed from the primary forms of mere external feeling, they have not been so explicit, as the assertors of a system so paradoxical ought assuredly to have been. On the fallacies of this very prevalent theory of mind, however, which is afterwards to be examined by us fully, I need not at present make any remarks.

Though this excessive simplification of the phenomena of human thought and feeling is, however, far more than the phenomena truly allow, it is not the less certain, that all the varieties of our consciousness, though not mere transformations of external sense, are, when traced to their source, the results of sensation, in its various original forms.

## CHAPTER III.

## CONSIDERATION OF THE CORPOREAL PART OF THE PROCESS, IN SENSATION.

THE mental phenomena, of the class which is at present under our consideration, being those which arise in consequence of certain previous affections of our organs of sense, it is necessary that we should take some notice of the corporeal part of the process ; though it must always be remembered, that it is the last part of the process, the mental affection only, which truly belongs to our science,—and that, if this, in all its varieties, had been the result of any other species of affections of organs constituted in any other manner,—as long as there was the regular correspondence of certain mental affections with certain organic affections,—the philosophy of mind would have continued precisely the same as now. Our systems of anatomy, and of the physiology of our mere bodily frame, would indeed have been different,—but not that more intimate physiology, which relates to the functions of the animating spirit, whose presence is life, and without which our bodily frame, in all its beautiful adaptation of parts to parts, is a machine, as inert and powerless, as the separate atoms that compose it.

The great essential organ of all sensation is the brain, with its appendages, particularly the nerves that issue from it to certain organs, which are more strictly termed the *organs of sense* ; as it is there the immediate objects, or external causes of sensation, the particles of light, for example, in vision, or of odour in smell, arrive, and come, as it were, into contact with the sensorial substance. Each organ has objects peculiar to itself, which it would be superfluous to enumerate ; and since the blind are still sensible of sound, and the deaf of colour, and both of smell, and taste, and touch, there must evidently be some difference, either in the sensorial substance itself which is diffused over the different organs, or in the mode of its diffusion and exposure in the different organs, from which this striking diversity of their relative sensibilities proceeds. The nervous matter, however, considered separately from the coats in which it is enveloped, is of the same half-fibrous, but soft and pulpy texture, as the substance of the brain itself, and is in perfect continuity with that substance, forming, therefore, with it, what may be considered as one mass, as much as the whole brain itself may be considered as one mass ; which has, indeed, for its chief seat the great

cavity of the head, but which extends, by innumerable ramifications, over the whole surface, and through the internal parts of the body.

In the brain itself, the anatomist is able to show us, with perfect clearness, many complicated parts, which we must believe to be adapted for answering particular purposes in the economy of life ; but when we have gazed with admiration on all the wonders which his dissecting hand has revealed to us, and have listened to the names with which he most accurately distinguishes the little cavities or protuberances which his knife has thus laid open to our view, we are still as ignorant as before of the particular purposes to which such varieties of form are subservient ; and our only consolation is,—for there is surely some comfort in being only as ignorant as the most learned,—that we know as much of the distinct uses of the parts as the anatomist himself, who exhibits them to us, and teaches us how to name them. The only physiological facts of importance, in reference to sensation, are, that if the nerves, which terminate in particular organs, be greatly diseased, the sensations which we ascribe to those particular organs cease ; and cease, in like manner, if the continuity of the nerves be destroyed, by cutting them in any part of their course, or if, without loss of absolute continuity, their structure, in any part of their course, be impaired by pressure, whether from tight ligatures drawn around them for the purpose of experiment, or from natural morbid causes. In short, if the brain and nerves be in a sound state, and certain substances be applied to certain parts of the nervous system,—as, for instance, sapid bodies to the extremities of the nerves of taste, or light to that expansion of the optic nerve, which forms what is termed the retina,—there is then instant sensation ; and when the brain itself is not in a sound state to a certain extent, or when the nerve which is diffused on a particular organ is, either at this extremity of it, or in any part of its course, to a certain degree impaired, then there is no sensation, though the same external causes be applied. This very slight general knowledge of the circumstances in which sensation takes place, and of the circumstances in which it does not take place, is all the knowledge which physiology affords us of the corporeal part of the process ;—and it is likely to continue so forever,—at least in all the more important respects of our ignorance,—since any changes which occur in the corpuscular motion, and consequent new arrangement of the particles of the substance of the brain and nerves, corresponding with the diversities of feeling during those particular states,—if such corpuscular motions or changes do really take place,—are probably far too minute to be observable by

our organs ; even though we could lay open all the internal parts of the brain to complete observation, without destroying, or at all affecting, the usual phenomena of life.

The brain, then, and the various nerves of sense in continuity with it, may, when taken together, be considered as forming one great organ, which I would term briefly the *sensorial* organ, essential to life, and to the immediate production of those mental phenomena which constitute our sensations, and perhaps, too, modifying in some measure, directly or indirectly, all the other phenomena of the mind.

Of the nature of the connexion of this great sensorial organ with the sentient mind, we never shall be able to understand more than is involved in the simple fact, that a certain affection of the nervous system precedes immediately a certain affection of the mind. But, though we are accustomed to regard this species of mutual succession of bodily and mental changes, as peculiarly inexplicable, from the very different nature of the substances which are reciprocally affected, it is truly not more so than any other case of succession of events, where the phenomena occur in substances that are not different in their properties, but analogous, or even absolutely similar ; since, in no one instance of this kind can we perceive more than the uniform order of the succession itself ; and of changes, the successions of which are all absolutely inexplicable, or, in other words, absolutely simple, and unsusceptible, therefore, of further analysis, none can be justly said to be more or less so than another. That a peculiar state of the mere particles of the brain should be followed by a change of state of the sentient mind, is truly wonderful ; but if we consider it strictly, we shall find it to be by no means more wonderful, than that the arrival of the moon, at a certain point of the heavens, should render the state of a body on the surface of our earth, different from what it otherwise would naturally be, or that the state of every particle of our globe, in its relative tendencies of gravitation, should be instantly changed, as it unquestionably would be, by the destruction of the most distant satellite of the most distant planet of our system, or probably too, by the destruction even of one of those remotest of stars, which are illuminating their own system of planets, so far in the depth of infinity, that their light,—to borrow a well-known illustration of sidereal distance,—may never yet have reached our earth, since the moment at which they darted forth their first beams, in the creation of the universe.

What the nature of the change is, that is produced at the extremity of the nerve, it is beyond our power to state, or even to guess ; and

we are equally ignorant of the manner in which this affection of the nerve is communicated, or is supposed to be communicated, to the brain. But that some affection, is gradually propagated, from the one to the other, so as to render the change in the state of the brain subsequent, by a certain interval, to the change in the state of the nerve, is universally believed.

But though it may be improbable, it is certainly far from impossible, that there is really no such progressive communication, as this which is supposed. The brain and nerves, though, from the difference of names, we might be led to consider them as distinct, are not separate organs, but are in continuity with each other, at least as much as various parts of the brain itself, which are comprehended under that single term, can be said to be continuous. When taken together, they form what is truly one complicated sensorial organ,—the organ of all our sensations, according to the different states in which the organ exists, or the different parts of it which are chiefly affected. In *hearing*, for example, a certain state of that part of the sensorial organ, which constitutes the auditory nerves,—in *vision*, a certain state of that part of it, which constitutes the optic nerves, is necessary to sensation,—and, in both cases according to the universal supposition on the subject, all or part of the brain likewise, must exist in a certain state, of which we know nothing more, than that it is followed, in the one case, by a sensation of sound, in the other case, by that of sight. The connexion of the mind with the bodily frame,—which must be equally inexplicable on every supposition that can be formed,—is not supposed, by any philosopher, to depend on the state of a single physical point of the brain alone; and, if it extend to more than one such point, there is nothing,—in the nature of the connexion itself, independently of experience,—which necessarily limits it to one portion of the complex sensorial organ, more than to another,—to the particles of the central mass of the brain, for example, more than to those of the nerve itself. It is experience, then, to which we are referred; and experience, though it shows that certain nerves are not essential to life, since life continues equally, after they may have been impaired, or even destroyed, is far from showing that an affection of them is not essential to *sensation*, at the very moment of the particular sensation; nor does it afford even the slightest evidence to justify the belief that the only use of the nerve is to communicate a certain affection to the brain, which affection of the mere central part of the sensorial organ would of itself immediately induce sensation, though the nerves were annihilated in

the preceding instant. The sensation may be the immediate effect, not of the state of the brain only, but of the state of the brain and of any particular nerve, considered as existing together at the moment ; in the same manner, as, by those who ascribe the immediate origin of sensation to the mere brain, exclusive of its nervous appendages, it is supposed to depend on the state, not of one physical point of the central brain, but on the state of many such co-existing points. We know not to what extent, in the great sensorial organ, this change is necessary ; but we believe, that, to some extent, it is necessary ; and the question is, whether, in the whole portion so affected, the affection be produced by a succession of changes, propagated from part to part. This may, perhaps, be the more probable supposition ;—but whatever may be the comparative probability or improbability, it certainly has not been demonstrated by observation or experiment ; nor can there be said to be, *a priori*, any absurdity in the opposite supposition, that the sensorial affection, to whatever extent it may be necessary, is not progressive, but immediate,—that, as long as the sensorial organ is unimpaired, the presence of the immediate object of sense, at the external organ, is instantly followed by that general change of state of the internal organ, whatever it may be, which is necessary to sensation, in the particular case ; in the same manner, as the presence of a celestial body, at a certain point of the heavens, is immediately followed by a change of state, in the whole of the gravitating particles of our globe ; the change in any long line of these gravitating particles being not communicated from each to each, but depending only on the presence of the distant sun or planet ; and beginning in the most remote particle of the line, at the very same instant, as in that which is nearest, on the surface of the earth. An instant change, in the long line of sensorial particles,—if the affection of a long line of these particles be necessary,—on the presence of a particular object, is not more improbable in itself, than this instant and universal influence of gravitation, that varies with all the varying positions of a distant object.

But is it, indeed, certain, that in sensation there is an affection of the central brain, whether immediate or progressive ? Is it not possible, at least, or more than possible, that the state of the mind, when we perceive colours and sounds, may be the immediate consequent of the altered state of that part of the sensorial organ, which forms the expansion of the nerve in the eye or ear ? The sensations must be supposed, in every theory, to be the consequents of states induced in some sensorial particles ; and there is nothing but the mere names of

brain and nerve, invented by ourselves, and the notions which we have chosen, without evidence, to attach to these mere names, which would mark the sensorial particles in the nervous expanse itself, as less fitted to be the immediate antecedents of sight and hearing, than the similar sensorial particles in any portion of the central mass of the brain. There is no reason, in short, *a priori*, for supposing that a state of the sensorial particles of the nerves cannot be the cause of sensation, and that the sensation must be the effect of a state equally unknown, of apparently similar particles, in that other part of the general sensorial organ, which we have denominated the brain. Sensation, indeed, is prevented by decay, or general disease of the brain, or by separation of the nerve, or pressure on it, in any part of its course. But it is far from improbable, that these causes, which must evidently be injurious to the organ, may act, merely by preventing that sound state of the nerve, which is necessary for sensation, and which, in an organ so very delicate, may be affected by the slightest influences,—by influences far slighter, than may naturally be expected to result from such an injury of such a part. The nerves and brain together form one great organ; and a sound state of the whole organ, even from the analogy of other grosser organs, may well be supposed to be necessary for the healthy state and perfect function of each separate part.

If, indeed, the appearance of the brain and nerves were such, as marked them to be peculiarly fitted for the communication of motion of any sort, there might be some presumption, from this very circumstance, in favour of the opinion, that sensation takes place, only after a progressive series of affections of some sort, propagated along the nerve to the interior brain. But it must be remembered, that the nature, both of the substance of the nerves themselves, and of the soft and lax substance in which they are loosely imbedded, renders them very ill adapted for the communication of nice varieties of motion, and gives some additional likelihood, therefore, to the supposition, that affections of the sensorial organ, so distinct as our sensations are from each other, and so exactly corresponding with the slightest changes of external objects, do not depend on the progressive communication of faint and imperceptible motion, in circumstances so unfavourable to the uninterrupted progress even of that more powerful motion, which can be measured by the eye. In a case so doubtful as this, however, in which the intervening changes supposed by philosophers,—if such a progressive series of motions do really take place,—are confessed to be beyond our observation, it is impossible for any one, who has a just



sense of the limits, which nature has opposed to our search, to pronounce with certainty, or even perhaps with that faint species of belief, which we give to mere probability.

But whatever reason there may be for removing this supposed link of the corporeal part of the process of sensation, there is another prior link, which it appears to me of great importance to separate from the chain. I allude to the distinction, which is commonly made, of the objects of sense, as acting themselves on our organs, or as acting through what is termed a *medium*.

"A second law of our nature," says Dr. Reid, "regarding perception, is, that we perceive no object, unless some impression is made upon the organ of sense, either by the immediate application of the object, or by some medium which passes between the object and the organ. In two of our senses, to wit, *touch* and *taste*, there must be an immediate application of the object to the organ. In the other three, the object is perceived at a distance, but still by means of a medium, by which some impression is made upon the organ. The effluvia of bodies, drawn into the nostrils with the breath, are the medium of *smell*; the undulations of the air are the medium of *hearing*; and the rays of light, passing from visible objects to the eye, are the medium of *sight*. We see no object, unless rays of light come from it to the eye. We hear not the sound of any body, unless the vibrations of some elastic medium, occasioned by the tremulous motion of the sounding body, reach our ear. We perceive no smell, unless the effluvia of the smelling body enter into the nostrils. We perceive no taste, unless the *sapid* body be applied to the tongue, or some part of the organ of taste. Nor do we perceive any tangible quality of a body, unless it touch the hands, or some part of our body." \*

It is evident, that in these cases of a supposed medium, which Dr. Reid considers as forming so important a distinction of our sensations, the real object of sense is not the distant object, but that which acts immediately upon the organs,—the light itself, not the sun which beams it on us,—the odorous particles which the wind has wafted to us from the rose, not the rose itself upon its stem,—the vibrations of the air, within our ear, not the cannon that is fired at the distance of miles. The light, the odour, the vibrating air, by which alone our senses are affected, act on our nerves of sight, of smell, and hearing, with an influence as direct, and as little limited in the kind of action, as that

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\* On the Intellectual Powers, Essay II. chap. ii.

with which the fruit, which we eat or handle, acts on our nerves of taste or touch. This influence of the objects immediately external, is all in which our organs of sense, and consequently the mind, as the principle of mere sensation, is concerned. The reference to the distant sun, or rose, or cannon, which alone leads us to speak of a medium in any of these cases, is the effect of another principle of our intellectual nature,—the principle of association, or suggestion,—that is afterwards to be considered by us, without which, indeed, our mere transient sensations would be comparatively of little value; but which, as a quality or susceptibility of the mind, is not to be confounded with that, by which the mind becomes instantly sentient, in consequence of a certain change produced in the state of its sensorial organ.

## CHAPTER IV.

### SENSATIONS OF SMELL—OF TASTE—OF HEARING.

#### SECTION I.

Though the sensations, which arise from affections of the same organ, are not in every case more analogous to each other, than the sensations which arise from affections of different organs,—and though, if we were to consider the sensations alone, therefore, without reference to their organs, we might not form precisely the same classification as at present,—the division, according to the organs affected, in most cases corresponds so exactly with that which we should make, in considering the mere sensations as affections of the mind, and affords in itself a principle of classification so obvious and definite, that we cannot hesitate in preferring it to any other which we might attempt to form.

In examining, then, according to their organs, our classes of sensation; and considering what feelings the organic affections excite *at present*, and what we may suppose them to have excited *originally*,—we will begin with those which are most simple, taking them in the order of smell, taste, hearing,—not so much from any hope, that the information which these afford will throw any great light on the more complex phenomena of sight and touch, as because the consideration of

them is easier, and may prepare us gradually for this difficult analysis, which awaits us afterwards, in the examination of those more perplexing phenomena.

### *Smell.*

The organ of smell is principally in the nostrils,—and partly also in some continuous cavities on which a portion of the olfactory nerves is diffused. When the particles of odour affect our nerves of smell, a certain state of mind is produced, varying with the nature of the odoriferous body. The mere existence of this state is all the information which we could originally have received from it, if it had been excited previously to our sensations of a different class. But, with our present knowledge, it seems immediately to communicate to us much more important information. We are not merely sensible of the particular feeling, but we refer it, in the instant,—almost in the same manner, as if the reference itself were involved in the sensation,—to a rose, hemlock, honeysuckle, or any other substance, agreeable or disagreeable; the immediate presence, or vicinity of which we have formerly found to be attended with this particular sensation. The power of making the reference, however, is unquestionably derived from a source different from that, from which the mere sensation is immediately derived. We must previously have seen, or handled, the rose, the hemlock, the honeysuckle; or if, without making this particular reference, we merely consider our sensation of smell as caused by some unknown object external to our mind, we must at least have previously seen or handled some other bodies, which excited, at the same time, sensations analogous to the present. If we had been endowed with the sense of smell, and with no other sense whatever, the sensations of this class would have been simple feelings of pleasure or pain, which we should as little have ascribed to an external cause, as any of our spontaneous feelings of joy or sorrow, that are equally lasting or equally transient. Even at present, after the connexion of our sensations of a fragrance with the bodies which we term fragrant, has been, in a great measure, fixed in our mind, by innumerable reflections, we still, if we attend to the process of the reference itself, are conscious of a suggestion of remembrance, and can separate the sensation, as a mere feeling of the mind, from the knowledge of the object, or external cause, of the sensation, which seems to us a subsequent state of the mind, however close the succession may be. Indeed, what is there which we can discover, in the mere sensa-

tion of fragrance, that is itself significant of solidity, extension, or whatever we may regard as essential to the existence of things without? As a mere change in the form of our being, it may suggest to us the necessity of some cause or antecedent of the change. But it is far from implying the necessity of a corporeal cause;—any more than such a direct corporeal cause is implied in any other modification of our being, intellectual or moral. Our belief of a system of external things, then, does not, as far as we can judge from the nature of the feelings, arise from our sensations of smell, more than from any of our internal pleasures or pains; but we class our sensations of smell as sensations, because we have previously believed in a system of external things, and have found by uniform experience, that the introduction of some new external body, either felt or seen by us, was the antecedent of those states of mind which we denominate sensations of smell, and not of those internal pains or pleasures, which we therefore distinguish from them, as the spontaneous affections of our own independent mind.

## SECTION II.—*Taste.*

In considering the phenomena, which the organ of taste presents, in the peculiar sensations that directly flow from it, it is necessary to make some little abstraction from the sensation of *touch*, which accompanies them, in consequence of the immediate application of the tangible sapid body to the organ; but the sensations, thus co-existing, are so very different in themselves, as to be easily distinguishable. When the organ of taste is in a sound state, the application of certain substances produces, immediately, that change or affection of the sensorial organs, which is attended with a corresponding change or affection of the sentient mind. In our present state of knowledge, we immediately refer this simple sensation, to something, which is bitter, or sweet, or acrid, or of some other denomination of sapid quality; and we have no hesitation, in classing the sensations as *sensations*,—effects of laws of action that belong jointly to matter and mind,—not as feelings that arise in the mind from its own independent constitution. But, if we attend sufficiently to the feeling that arises in the case of taste, we shall find, however immediate the reference to a sapid body may seem to be, that it is truly successive to the simple sensation, and is the mere suggestion of former experience, when a body previously recognised by us as an external substance, was applied to our organ of taste;—in the same manner, as,

when we see ashes and dying embers, we immediately infer some previous combustion, which we could not have inferred, if combustion itself had been a phenomenon altogether unknown to us. In the simple sensation which precedes the reference,—the mere pleasure of sweetness or the mere pain of bitterness,—there is nothing which seems to mark more distinctly the presence of honey or wormwood, or any similar external substance, than in any of our joys or sorrows, to which we have not given a name ; and there can be no doubt, that, if the particular feeling which we now term *joy*, and the particular feeling which we now term *sorrow*, had been excited, whenever we knew, from other sources, that certain bodes were applied to the tongue, we should have considered these internal feelings as sensations, in the strict sense of the word, precisely in the same manner, as we now regard, as sensations, the feeling which we term *sweetness*, and the feeling which we term *bitterness*, because, like these sensations, they could not have failed to suggest to us, by the common influence of association, the presence and direct coincidence of the object without. In the case of *taste*, therefore, as in the case of *smell*, we could not, from the simple sensations,—if these alone had been given to us,—have derived any knowledge of an external world, of substances extended and resisting ; but we consider them as sensations, in the strict philosophic meaning of the term, because we have previously acquired our belief of an external world.

It may be remarked of these two classes of sensations, now considered, that they have a greater mutual resemblance, than our sensations of any other kind. It is only a *blind* man who thinks that what is called *scarlet* is like the sound of a trumpet ; but there are *tastes* which we consider as like *smells*, in the same manner as we consider them to be like other tastes ; and, if we had not acquired a distinct knowledge of the seats of our different organs, and had yet known that smells and tastes arose from external causes acting upon some one or other of these, we should probably have been greatly puzzled, in many cases, in our attempt to refer the particular sensation to its particular organ.

In considering the advantages which we derive from our organs of *smell* and *taste*, the mere pleasures which they directly afford, as a part of the general happiness of life, are to be regarded, from their frequent occurrence, as of no inconsiderable amount. The fragrance of the fields enters largely into that obscure but delightful group of images, which rise in our minds on the mere names of *spring*, *summer*, *the country*, and seems to represent the very form of ethereal purity, as if it were the breath of heaven itself.

The pleasures of the sense of *taste*, in the moderate enjoyment of which there is nothing reprehensible, are, in a peculiar manner, associated with family happiness. To have met frequently at the same board, is no small part of many of the delightful remembrances of friendship; and to meet again at the same board, after years of absence, is a pleasure that almost makes atonement for the long and dreary interval between. In some half-civilized countries, in which the influence of simple feelings of this kind is at once more forcible in itself, and less obscured in the confusion of ever varying frivolities and passions, this hospitable bond forms one of the strongest ties of mutual obligation, sufficient often to check the impetuosity of vindictive passions, which no other remembrance could, in the moment of fury, restrain. Had there been no pleasure attached to a repast, independent of the mere relief from the pain of hunger, the coarse and equal food would probably have been taken by each individual apart, and might even, like our other animal necessities, have been associated with feelings which would have rendered solitude a duty of external decorum. It would not be easy, even for those who have been accustomed to trace a simple cause through all its remotest operations, to say how much of happiness, and how much even of the warm tenderness of virtue, would be destroyed, by the change of manners, which would simply put an end to the social meal; that meal which now calls all the members of a family to suspend their cares for a while, and to enjoy that cheerfulness, which is best reflected from others, and which can be permanent only when it is so reflected, from soul to soul, and from eye to eye.

One very important advantage, more directly obvious than this, and of a kind which every one may be disposed more readily to admit, is afforded by our senses of smell and taste, in guiding our *selection* of the substances which we take as alimentary. To the other animals, whose senses of this order are so much quicker, and whose instincts, in accommodation to their want of general language, and consequent difficulty of acquiring knowledge by mutual communication, are providentially allotted to them in a degree and of a kind far surpassing the instincts of the slow but noble reflector *man*, these senses seem to furnish *immediate* instruction ~~as~~ to the substances proper for nourishment, to the exclusion of those which would be noxious. To *man*, however, who is under the guardianship of affections more beneficial to him than any instinct of his own could be, there is no reason to believe, that they do this *primarily*, and of themselves, though, in a state in which he is

brought up, instructed with respect to every thing noxious or salutary, by those who watch constantly over him in the early period of his life, and having therefore no necessity to appeal to the mere discrimination of his own independent organs, and, still more, as in the artificial state of things in which he lives, his senses are at once perplexed and palled, by the variety and confusion of luxurious preparation, it is not easy to say, how far his primary instincts,—if it had not been the high and inevitable dignity of his nature to rise above these,—might, of themselves, have operated as directors. But, whatever their *primary* influence may be, the *secondary* influence of his organs of taste and smell is not the less important. When we have once completely learned what substances are noxious, and what are salutary, we then, however similar they may be in their other sensible qualities, discriminate these as often as they are again presented to us, by that *taste* or *smell*, which they affect with different sensations; and our acquired knowledge has thus ultimately, in guiding our choice, the force and the vivacity of an original instinct.

### SECTION III.—*Hearing.*

IN considering the phenomena of the sense of hearing, we may apply to them the same remark which has been already applied to the phenomena of the senses before considered. They are classed by us as sensations, merely in consequence of our previous belief in the existence of those external bodies, the motion of which we have known to be followed by similar feelings. Our mind begins suddenly to exist in a certain state; and we call this state *joy* or *sorrow*, without supposing that it depends on the immediate presence of any external object. It begins again to exist in a different state, and we say that we hear a flute, referring the feeling immediately to an external cause. But there can be no doubt, that, in making this reference in the one case, and not in the other, we are influenced by experience, and by experience alone. If we suppose ourselves endowed with the single sense of hearing, and incapable therefore of having previously seen or felt the flute, which is breathed before us, or any other extended and resisting object whatever, we may imagine the mere sound to recur innumerable times, without discovering any mode by which it can give us more knowledge than we should receive from a similar recur-

rence of any internal joy or sorrow. That we should be able to refer it to a body, such as we now mean when we speak of a flute, is manifestly impossible ; since this implies knowledge of *solidity*, and *form*, and *colour*, which could not be acquired without touch and sight. But there seems even no reason to think, that we should refer it to any external cause whatever, unless, indeed, such a reference necessarily accompanied every feeling, which we know is far from being the case, since we have many internal pleasures, not more like to each other than they are to the sound of a flute, which we do not refer to any thing separate or separable from the constitution of our own mind. In *hearing*, therefore, as in *taste* and *smell*, we do not derive from its sensations our knowledge of things external, but, in consequence of our knowledge of things external, we regard these feelings as *sensations*, in the common philosophic meaning of that term.

Simple as our sense of hearing may seem, it affords a striking specimen of that almost infinite variety, which is not inconsistent with the closest resemblance ; and the notion which we may form of the innumerable varieties of sound, is perhaps not more vast, when we attempt to wander over its boundless discrepancies, than when we limit ourselves to its greatest similarities, in a single *word* of a language, or in that which we might be inclined at first to regard as simplicity itself, a single *musical tone*.

“A flute, a violin, a hautboy, and a French horn,” it has been truly remarked, “may all sound the same tone, and be easily distinguishable. Nay, if twenty human voices sound the same note, and with equal strength, there will still be some difference. The *same voice*, while it retains its proper distinctions, may be varied many ways, by sickness or health, youth or age, leanness or fatness, good or bad humour. The *same words*, spoken by foreigners and natives, nay, by different provinces of the same nation, may be very easily distinguished.” \*

When we speak of the value of this sense as a part of our mental constitution, it is enough to say, that it is to it we are indirectly indebted for the use of verbal language,—that power so peculiarly distinctive of man, that, in the poetical phraseology of one celebrated country, it gave him his name as a *divider of the voice*, or in other words, an utterer of articulate sounds. If we consider speech simply as a medium of the reciprocal expression of present feelings to the little society of

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\* Reid's Inquiry into the Human Mind, c. iv. sect. 1.



citizen and friends of which we are a part, even in this limited view, of what inestimable value does it appear ! To communicate to every one around us, in a single moment, the happiness which we feel ourselves,—to express the want, which we have full confidence will be relieved as soon as it is known,—or to have the still greater privilege of being ourselves the ministers of comfort to wants, which otherwise could not have been relieved by us, because they could not have been discovered,—when the heart which we love is weighed down with imaginary grief, to have it in our power, by a few simple sounds, to convert anguish itself into rapture,—these are surely no slight advantages ; and yet compared with the benefit which it affords to man as an *intellectual* being, even these are inconsiderable. To be without language, spoken or written, is almost to be without thought ; and if, not an individual only, living among his fellows whose light may be reflected upon him, but our whole race had been so constituted, it is scarcely possible to conceive that beings, whose instincts are so much less various and powerful than those of the other animals, could have held over them that dominion, which they now so easily exercise. Wherever two human beings, therefore, are to be found, there language is. We must not think, in a speculative comparison of this sort, of mere savage life ; for the rudest savages would be as much superior to a race of beings without speech, as the most civilized nations at this moment are, compared with the half brutal wanderers of forests and deserts, whose ferocious ignorance seems to know little more than how to destroy and be destroyed. Even these are still associated in tribes, that concert together verbally their schemes of havock and defence ; and employ, in deliberating on the massacre of beings as little human as themselves, or the plunder of a few huts, that seem to contain nothing but misery and the miserable, the same glorious instrument with which Socrates brought wisdom down from heaven to earth, and Newton made the heavens themselves, and all the wonders which they contain, descend, as it were, to be grasped and measured by the feeble arm of man.

Such are the benefits of language, even in its fugitive state ; but the noblest of all the benefits which it confers, is in that permanent transmission of thought, which gives to each individual the powers and the wisdom of his species ; or rather,—for the united powers and wisdom of his species, as they exist in myriads, at the same moment with himself, upon the globe, would be comparatively a trifling endowment,—it gives him the rich inheritance of the accumulated acquisitions of all the

multitudes, who, like himself, in every preceding age, have inquired, and meditated, and patiently discovered, or by the happy inspiration of genius, have found truths which they scarcely sought, and penetrated, with the rapidity of a single glance, those depths of nature, which the weak steps and dim torch-light of generations after generations had vainly laboured to explore. By that happy invention, which we owe indirectly to the ear, the boundaries of time seem to be at once removed. Nothing is *past*; for every thing lives, as it were, before us. The thoughts of beings who have trod the most distant soil, in the most distant period, arise again in our mind, with the same warmth and freshness as when they first awoke to life in the bosom of their author. That system of perpetual transmigration,—which was but a fable, as believed by Pythagoras,—becomes reality when it is applied, not to the soul itself, but to its feelings. There is then a true *metempsychosis*, by which the poet and the sage, in spreading their conceptions and emotions from breast to breast, may be said to extend their existence through an ever changing immortality.

The unlimited transmission of thought, which the invention of language allows, brings the universe of mind into that point of view, in which an eloquent living French author has considered the physical universe,—as exhibiting at once, in all its splendid varieties of events, and uniting, as it were, in a single moment, the wonders of eternity. “Combine,” says he, “by your imagination, all the fairest appearances of things. Suppose that you see at once, all the hours of the day, and all the seasons of the year,—a morning of spring and of autumn,—a night brilliant with stars, and a night obscure with clouds,—meadows enamelled with flowers,—fields waving with harvest,—woods heavy with the frosts of winter,—you will then have a just notion of the spectacle of the universe. Is it not wondrous, that while you are admiring the sun, who is plunging beneath the vault of the west, another observer is beholding him as he quits the regions of the east,—in the same instant reposing, weary, from the dust of the evening, and awaking, fresh and youthful, in the dews of morn! there is not a moment of the day, in which the same sun is not rising, shining in his zenith, and setting on the world! or rather, our senses abuse us, and there is no rising, nor setting, nor zenith, nor east, nor west; but all is one fixed point, at which every species of light is beaming at once from the unalterable orb of day.”

In like manner,—if I may venture to consider the phenomena of the mind in the same fanciful point of view,—every moment may be said to

be exhibiting the birth, and progress, and decay of thought. Infancy, maturity, old age, death, are mingled, as it were, in one universal scene. The opinions which are perishing in one mind, are rising in another; and often, perhaps, at the last fading ray of the flame of genius, that may have almost dazzled the world with excess of brilliancy, some star may be kindling, which is to shine upon the intellectual universe with equal light and glory.

Such are the benefits resulting from that happiest of all inventions, which we may be said to owe to our sense of hearing,—if, indeed, it be an *invention* of man, and not rather, as many have thought, a *coeval power*, bestowed on him by his provident Creator at the very moment which gave him life. But still, whether original or invented, the ear must equally have been its primary recipient. We have seen, in the view which we have taken of it, that of our more social intercourse it constitutes the chief delight,—giving happiness to hours, the wearying heaviness of which must otherwise have rendered existence an insupportable burthen; and that, in its more important character, as fixed, in the imperishable records which are transmitted, in uninterrupted progression, from the generation which passes away, to the generation that succeeds, it gives to the individual man the product of all the creative energies of mankind; extending even to the humblest intellect, which can still mix itself with the illustrious dead, that privilege, which has been poetically allotted to the immortality of genius, of being “the citizen of every country, and the contemporary of every age.”

After the remarks on this advantage received from language, which is unquestionably, and beyond all comparison, the most inestimable benefit which the sense of hearing affords,—it would be improper to omit wholly the mention of the pleasure, which we receive from it, as a source of *musical* delight,—of that expression of feeling, which itself, almost like verbal discourse, may be said to be a language, since it is the utterance of thought and emotion from heart to heart,—but which has a voice, as independent of the mere arbitrary forms of speech, as the tears of gratitude, or the smiles of love, that may indeed give eloquence to words but require no words to render them eloquent. Though, when very strictly considered, even the pure, and almost spiritual delight of music, may perhaps be counted only a pleasure of sense, it yet approaches, by so many striking analogies, to the nature of our intellectual enjoyments, that it may almost be said to belong to that class; and though,—relatively to minds that are capable of enjoyments more truly intellectual,—it is to be considered as a mere pastime or relaxation, it

assumes a far higher character, in its relation to the general pleasures of common minds, and may be said, at least, to be the intellectual luxury of those who are incapable of any other luxury, that deserves so honorable a name. And it is well that there should be some intermediate pleasure of this sort, to withdraw for a while the dull and the sensual, from the grosser existence in which they may be sunk, and to give them some glimpses, at least, of a state of purer enjoyment, than that which is to be derived from the sordid gains and sordid luxuries of common life.

The phenomena of music, in addition to their general interest, are truly worthy, in another respect, of our astonishment, from that striking diversity of organic power in the perception of *melody* and still more of *harmony* which they exhibit in different individuals, in whom all other circumstances are apparently the same,—a diversity which has often attracted the attention of philosophers, and has led even those who have no great tendency to speculation of any kind, to *wonder* at least, which is the first step of all philosophizing. In the present instance, however, unfortunately this first step is the only step which philosophers have been able to take. They have been obliged to desist, after all their efforts to proceed further, and to submit to share, and even to acknowledge that they share, the ignorance of the vulgar. If, indeed, the want of a musical ear had involved either a general defect of hearing, or a general slowness of discrimination in other cases of nice diversity, the wonder would not have been great. But those who are without ear for music, perceive as readily as others the faintest whisper ;—they distinguish like them, the faintest shades of difference in the mere articulations of sound which constitute the varieties of language, nor the articulations only, but the differences also of the mere tones of affection or displeasure, grief or gaiety, which are so strikingly analogous to the varied expression of musical feeling ;—and their power of discrimination in every other case, in which the judgment can be exercised, is not less perfect. Nay,—to increase still more the difficulty,—they are often as sensible as others, of the beauty of series of tones of a different kind ; and some of our best poets and declaimers,—who of course must have had a quick discernment of metrical rhythm, and of the melody of elocution,—have yet been incapable of distinguishing the *musical* relations of sounds, as reciprocally high or low,—the melody that results from them in certain successions, and the harmony or the discord of their union. That it depends chiefly, or perhaps entirely, on the structure or state of the mere corporeal

organ of hearing, which is of a kind, it must be remembered, peculiarly complicated, and therefore susceptible of great original diversity in the parts, and relations of the parts that form it, is very probable; though the difference of the separate parts themselves, or of their relations to each other, may, to the mere eye, be so minute, as never to be discovered by dissection,—thus leaving, to every future race of inquirers, the same difficulty which has perplexed ourselves, and the same impossibility of overcoming it. In the sense of vision, I may remark, there is a species of defect, very analogous to the want of musical ear,—a defect, which consists in the difficulty, or rather the incapacity, of distinguishing some colours from each other,—and colours which to general observers, seem of a very opposite kind. As the want of musical ear implies no general defect of mere quickness of hearing, this visual defect, in like manner, is to be found in persons who are yet capable of distinguishing, with perfect accuracy, the form, and the greater or less brilliancy of the coloured object;—and I may remark too, in confirmation of the opinion, that the want of musical ear depends on causes not mental but organic; that, in this analogous case, some attempts not absolutely unsuccessful have been made, to explain the apparent confusion of colours, by certain peculiarities of the external organ of sight. Though the one case, however, were to throw no light upon the other, it is still gratifying to philosophers, to have a case at all analogous, to which, when they are weary of considering what has baffled all their endeavours to explain it, they may have the comfort of turning away their attention, without the mortification of seeming absolutely to fly from the subject.

In considering sound relatively to its external cause, we give the name of vibration to the successive pulses, or alternate approaches and recessions of the particles of the elastic sounding body; and the word is a very convenient one for expressing this series. But still the word, though single, is not the less expressive of a plurality of states, which have no other unity, than as they are comprehended in this single word.

What, then, is truly meant, when it is said, that, for producing the mental affection which constitutes hearing, some previous vibration is necessary? It certainly cannot mean, that the vibration is any thing in itself different from the series of physical events which it expresses, however few or numerous these may be, since it is only the name which we give to them when we consider them together; nor can it mean that the direct cause of the sensation is any thing different from

the one organic state immediately preceding the sensation,—a state which may, indeed, have resulted from a long sequence of prior organic states, produced during the continued vibratory motion of the air, but which is itself, in its relation to the phenomenon which succeeds it,—that affection of the sentient mind which constitutes *hearing*,—to be considered independently of these prior states, that have no other relation to the mind, than as gradually inducing that ultimate organic state, which is the state that is followed by sensation. There is a part, less or greater, of the sensorial organ, which must be affected in a certain manner, before the sensation of hearing can take place; and in vibration there is nothing but a repeated approach and secession of the vibrating particles. If vibration, then, or a series of pulses, be necessary, it is evident that a corresponding series of changes in the organ is necessary; that is to say, there is no one instant, at which the vibrating particles are in such a state relatively to the sensorial organ, that if no previous change had been excited in the organ itself, they could have produced in it immediately, the precise state which is instantly followed by the mental affection of hearing. There must, therefore, be a *series* of changes in the sensorial organ itself, the last of which only is followed by sensation. The particles of the air, or any other elastic medium, for example, must, in their *first* appulse, produce a certain state of the sensorial organ; in their *second* appulse, a different state, by acting on an organ already affected in a certain manner; in their *third* appulse, a still different state; and thus successively, till at last they produce that particular definite state of the sensorial organ, in consequence of which the mind becomes instantly sentient,—a state which could not have been produced by any single impulse of the particles on the unaffected organ, because then vibration, or a series of pulses, would not have been necessary.

To this successive modification of states of an organ, terminating in a particular result, different from each of the prior states, there are abundant analogies in the history of the mind, and many in the phenomena of sensation itself. One of the most remarkable of these is the production of the sensation of whiteness, by the rapid revolution of a cylinder, on which the separate prismatic colours, and the separate colours only, are painted in certain proportions; each colour, in this case, acting on the organ already affected by a former colour, till a sensation altogether different from the result of each of them when separate, is their joint ultimate result, the sensation of whiteness, without any external object that is white.

In this way only, by a series of progressive organic affections, and not by any single affection, can the vibration of an elastic medium, as different from one simple unrepeatd impulse, terminate in the production of sound. It is, in short, a name for this series of changes, and nothing more.

If, in a case so very obscure as that of musical ear, in which all that is truly evident, is, that in different individuals, there is a diversity of some kind or other,—I could permit myself to indulge any conjecture with respect to this diversity,—I might perhaps be inclined to look to the view now given of the real nature of vibration, and its progressive effects on the auditory part of our nervous system, as furnishing some slight ground, not indeed for any theory, which is far too presumptuous a word, but for the preference of one mere possibility, to other mere possibilities, which is all that can be hoped in any conjecture on so very dim and impalpable a subject.

We have seen that the series of pulses of the vibrating air,—if vibration, or a series of pulses be necessary to sound,—must produce a series of changes in the sensorial organ, which produce no corresponding affection of the mind, till at last a state of the organ is produced, which is attended with sensation. This, and this only, can be meant, when we speak of vibration as the antecedent of sound,—a series of organic changes, and, after this series, an affection of the mind. In such circumstances, it is certainly more probable, that the organ thus affected with a series of progressive changes, does not pass instantly from the greatest change to the state in which it was originally, before the first pulse, but that it retains this state for a time, however short, or at least passes through some series of states, in its gradual return, so that, if a new vibration be excited by the pulse of any sounding body, before the organ of hearing have returned to its original state, the effect may be supposed to be different from that which it would have been, if the same vibration had been primarily communicated to the organ in its state of rest, or in that state, which, from our want of a better word, may be termed its state of *rest*.

The phenomena most analogous to these vibratory affections of the ear, as depending on successive impulses, are unquestionably the phenomena of *ticillation*, or rather, to express what is so familiar and simple, by a more homely and appropriate word, the phenomena of *tickling*. In this, the great circumstance distinguishing musical feeling is to be found, that the feeling arises not from the separate impressions, but from their successions or co-existence. When the palm of

the hand is gently tickled, as the finger passes rapidly and repeatedly over the palm, the parts first affected are again affected with various degrees of pressure, as the ear, in melody, is successively affected by repeated varieties of vibration; and various parts of the organ of touch exist, at the same moment in various states, forming one joint result of sensations, as, in harmony, various vibrations of the organ of hearing co-exist, and blend together in one mingled delight. To produce tickling, a certain rapidity of succession is necessary; for if the parts first affected, have returned to their original state, before other parts begin to be affected, or themselves to be affected again, the slow motion, it is evident, may be continued for any length of time, without any effect, different from that of simple pressure. The quicker, then, the return of the parts may be to their original state, the less will be the titillation; and it is very probably a difference in this quickness of return, which constitutes the difference of ticklishness, so remarkable in different individuals, who feel equally the light pressure of each separate touch. That there is a difference of ticklishness in different persons, is a well known fact; some being easily excited even to convulsive laughter by slight motions, that scarcely produce any effect in others, beyond that of the simple primary sensation of touch. A person who is ticklish, and a person who is not ticklish, agree in receiving this first tactual sensation; but they differ afterwards, in this respect, that when the same slight impulse is rapidly repeated on the same surface, it produces a livelier effect than before in the one, but not in the other. The organ of the one who is not ticklish is in the same state, or nearly in the same state, when it receives the second, third, and fourth impression, as when it received the first, and no peculiar excitement, therefore, is produced. The organ of the other, more susceptible, or more tenacious of the affection produced, has not returned to its original state when the rapid impression is repeated, and is, therefore, at every new impression, affected in a different manner.

From the analogy of these phenomena of mere *tickling*, it cannot be deemed absolutely impossible, since a diversity of some kind there must be, that in those who receive no pleasure from music, as in those who are not ticklish, there is a rapid return of the nervous organ, after each separate affection, to its original state; that each separate touch or pressure in the one case, and each separate tone in the other case, produces its particular effect,—that effect which it would have produced in all, if unaccompanied by any other tone in music,



or slight pressure in tickling,—but that a succession of these produces no effect different from that which each would have produced singly. A certain interval is necessary for distinct hearing in every case ; and, before this interval has passed, the auditory nerves, in this case, may be imagined to be again quiescent, or nearly quiescent.

All which is necessary in this inquiry, is to account for the mere original defect of pleasure ; since, if the relations of notes, as reciprocally high or low, never gave any delight, the ear, having no object of interest in these successions, would soon habitually neglect them, and at length cease altogether to distinguish them, attending only to the verbal meaning of sounds, and not to their tone. That the ear may be improved by cultivation, or, in other words, by nice attention to the differences of musical sound, every one knows ; and if this attention can enable us, even in mature life, to distinguish sounds as different in themselves, which but for the habitual attention, we should have regarded as the same, it may well be supposed, that continued inattention, from earliest infancy, may render us insensible of musical relations still more obvious and precise, than those which we have thus only learned to distinguish ; or, which is the same thing, that continued attention from infancy to slight musical differences of sound,—an attention which may be regarded as the natural effect of pleasure received,—may render us capable of distinguishing tones as very dissimilar, the differences of which, however obvious at present, we should scarcely, but for such original attentive discrimination, have been able to detect.

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## CHAPTER V.

OF THE SENSATIONS COMMONLY ASCRIBED TO TOUCH.—ANALYSIS OF  
THESE SENSATIONS.

## SECTION I.

If priority of sensation alone were to be regarded, the sense of *touch* might deserve to be considered in the first place ; as it must have been exercised long before birth, and is probably the very feeling with which sentient life commences. The act of *birth*, in relation to the mind of the little stranger, who is thus painfully ushered into the wide scene of the world, is a series of feelings, of this class ; and the first feeling which awaits him, on his entrance,—in the change of temperature to which he is exposed,—is still to be referred to the same organ. It is at this most important moment of existence, when one dark and solitary life of months, of which no vestige is afterwards to remain in the memory, is finished, and a new life of many years,—a life of sunshine and society,—is just beginning, that Pain, the companion of human life, receives him on the first step of his journey, and embraces him in his iron arms.

The sensations of *heat* and *cold* arise from affections of our nerves of touch, or at least from affections of nerves, which, as equally diffused and intermingled with them, it is impossible to distinguish from those which constitute our organ of touch, the same wide surface rendering us sensible, as it were, at every point, of warmth as of pressure.

Our sensations of warmth have little analogy to the other sensations commonly ascribed to this organ ; and the great difference of the feelings, has led some physiologists to believe, that the organs of sensations so different must themselves be different. But even though the sensations were as dissimilar as is supposed, there is no reason *a priori* to believe,—and to experience, it is evident, that, in this case, we cannot appeal, so as to derive from it any ground for believing,—that sensations, which are very different, must arise from affections of different organs. As far, indeed, as we can safely appeal to experience, in this very case, there are sensations which we never hesitate in referring to our tactual nerves, as different from the more common sensations ascribed to touch, as the sensation of warmth itself. I allude to the pain of puncture or laceration of the skin. Indeed, if the brain be ulti-

mately the great organ of all our sensations, it is evident that we must refer to affections of *one* sensorial organ, not the various feelings of touch only, but, with them, the still greater variety of feelings that constitute our sensations of smell, taste, sound, and colour.

But are we indeed sure, that there truly is that great dissimilarity supposed, or may not our belief of it arise from our reference to touch of sensations that truly do not belong to it? Such, at least, is the opinion, to which, I think, a nicer analysis will lead us. The primary original feelings, which we owe to our mere organ of touch, are far more analogous to the sensations of warmth, or of pain on puncture, than to the perceptions of form and hardness, which are generally regarded as tangible. Before entering on the analysis, however, it will be necessary to consider, what are the sensations which we are supposed to owe to this organ.

The sensations of *heat* and *cold*,—as received from our organ of touch,—we may almost lay out of account in our analytical inquiry. It is evident, that, in classing our warmth or chillness, as a sensation,—and not as a feeling that has arisen spontaneously in the mind,—we are influenced by that experience, which has previously given us the belief of objects external,—at least, of our own corporeal frame,—and that, if we had been unsusceptible of any other sensations, than those of heat and cold, we should as little have believed these to arise directly from a corporeal cause, as any of our feelings of joy or sorrow. The same remark may be applied to the painful sensations of puncture and laceration.

It is only to the other more important information ascribed to the sense of touch, therefore, that our attention is to be directed.

By *touch*, we are commonly said to be made acquainted with *extension, magnitude, divisibility, figure, motion, solidity, liquidity, visciditv, hardness, softness, roughness, smoothness*. These terms are very convenient for expressing notions of certain forms or states of bodies, that are easily distinguishable. But, though specifically distinguishable, they admit generically of very considerable reduction and simplification. *Hardness* and *softness*, for example, are expressive only of greater or less resistance,—*roughness* is irregularity of resistance, when there are intervals between the points that resist, or when some of these points project beyond others,—*smoothness* is complete uniformity of resistance,—*liquidity, visciditv*, are expressive of certain degrees of yieldingness to our effort, which solidity excludes, unless when the effort employed is violent. All, in short, are only different species or

degrees of that which we term *resistance*, whatever it may be, which impedes our continued effort, and impedes it variously as the substances without are themselves various. Such is one order, then, of the feelings commonly ascribed to the sense which we are at present considering.

To proceed to the other supposed tangible qualities, before included in our enumeration,—*figure* is the boundary of extension, as *magnitude* is that which it comprehends; and *divisibility*, if we consider the apparent continuity of the parts which we divide, is only extension under another name. If we except *motion*, therefore, which is not permanent, but accidental,—and the knowledge of which is evidently secondary to the knowledge which we acquire of our organs of sense, before which the objects are said to *move*, and secondary in a much more important sense, as resulting not from any direct immediate organic state of one particular moment, but from a comparison of sensations past and present,—all the information, which we are supposed to receive primarily and directly from touch, relates to modifications of *resistance* and *extension*.

Though it is to the sense of *touch*, however, that the origin of the knowledge of these is generally ascribed, I am inclined to think, in opposition to this opinion, that in both cases, the reference is wrongly made,—that if we had the sense of touch only, we should not be sensible of resistance, nor, I conceive, even of extension,—and that we seem to perceive the varieties of extension and resistance immediately by touch only, because the simple original tactual feeling has become representative of these, in the same manner, and for the same reason, as we seem to perceive the varieties of distance immediately by the eye. The sense of touch has unquestionably, like all our other senses, its own peculiar feelings, though for the simple original feelings, attached to the affections of this most extensive of organs, we have unfortunately no name, but that which is applied in popular, and even in philosophic language, to all the affections of the mind. Our joy or grief, hope or fear, love or hate, we term *feelings*, as readily and frequently, as we use this term to express our sensations of *touch*; and that, which, however restricted in its original meaning, is now the common name of our mental affections of every class, has, by this extension, unfortunately, become a very unfit one for distinguishing a limited order of those affections.

Whatever be the term which we may use, however, there is, and must be, a sensation peculiar to touch, without regard to the extent or quantity of the surface impressed,—as there is, in colour, a sensation

peculiar to vision, without regard to the extent of the portion of the *retina* on which the light may have fallen. Every physical point of our organ of touch, when existing in a certain state, is capable of inducing in the mind a peculiar feeling, though no other physical point of the organ were affected,—as every physical point of the *retina*, though but a single ray of light were admitted to the eye, is capable of inducing in the mind a peculiar affection of vision; and when many such physical points are affected together, by some impressing surface, the form of which we think that we discover immediately by touch, it is from experience only that we can learn the vicinity of the physical points of our own tactual surface thus impressed, and consequently the continued extension of the object which impresses them. Before we have so much knowledge of external things, as to know even that we have any bodily organs whatever,—and it is of this state of absolute ignorance alone that we must think, as often as we speculate on the information which our senses separately afford,—when we know as little of our bodily frame, as of that material universe, of which we know nothing, we cannot, by the very terms of this supposition, know that different points of our organ of touch are affected in a certain manner,—that these points are contiguous to each other—and that the mass affecting these contiguous points, must consequently itself be composed of points, that are, in like manner, contiguous. We know nothing of our organs—we know nothing of any external masses—but a certain feeling is excited in our mind; and it is this simple feeling alone, whatever, it may be, which constitutes the direct elementary sensation of touch, though this simple elementary sensation, like many other sensations, may afterwards be so blended with other feelings, as to become significant of them, and even to seem to involve them, as if originally and necessarily co-existing.

In defining *sensation*, when we began our inquiry into its nature, to be that affection of the mind, which is immediately subsequent to the affection of certain organs, induced by the action of external bodies; two assumptions were made,—the existence of foreign changeable external bodies, as separate from the mind,—and the existence of organs, also separate from the mind, and in relation to it truly external, like other bodies, but forming a permanent part of our corporeal frame, and capable of being affected, in a certain manner, by the other bodies, of which the existence was assumed. As far as our analytical inquiry has yet proceeded, these assumptions are assumptions still. We have not been able to detect, in the sensations considered more than in any

of our internal pleasures or pains, any circumstances that seem to be indicative of a material world without.

Our analytical inquiry itself, however, even in attempting to trace the circumstances in which the belief originates, must proceed on that very belief. Accordingly, in examining our senses of smell, taste, and hearing, I uniformly took for granted the existence of odoriferous, sapid, and vibrating bodies, and considered merely, whether the sensations excited by these, were, of themselves, capable of communicating to us any knowledge of the external and independent existence of the bodies which excited them.

In the present stage of our inquiry, I must, in like manner, take for granted the existence of bodies, which act, by their contiguity or pressure, on our organs of *touch*, as the odoriferous or sapid particles act on our nerves of smell and taste. All our language is at present adapted to a system of external things. There is no direct vocabulary of skepticism; and even the most cautious and philosophic inquirer, therefore, must often be obliged to express his doubt, or his dissent, in language that implies affirmation. In the present case, when we attempt to analyze our sensations, it is impossible to speak of the circumstances in which the infant is placed, or even to speak of the infant himself, without that assumption which we have been obliged to make. The real existence of an external universe, and the belief of that existence, are, however, in themselves, perfectly separate and distinct; and it is not the existence of an external world which we are now endeavouring to establish as an object of belief. We are only endeavouring, in our analysis of the sensations afforded by our different organs, to ascertain in what circumstance the belief arises. There might be a world of suns and planets, though there were no human being, whose mind could be affected with belief of it; and even the most zealous defenders of the reality of external nature must admit, that, though no created thing but ourselves were in existence, our mind might still have been so constituted, as to have the very series of feelings, which form at present its successive phenomena, and which are ascribed in no small number to the action of external things.

Are the *primary* sensations derived from the organ of touch, then, of such a kind as to afford us that knowledge, which they are supposed to give of things without?

Let us imagine a being, endowed with the sense of *touch*, and with every other sense and faculty of our mind, but not with any previous knowledge of his own corporeal frame, or of other things external,—

and let us suppose a small body, of any shape, to be pressed, for the first time, on his open hand. Whatever feeling mere touch can give, directly of itself, would of course be the same in this case, as now, when our knowledge is increased and complicated, from many other sources.

Let the body, thus impressed, be supposed to be a small cube, of the same temperature with the hand itself, that all considerations of heat or cold may be excluded, and the feeling produced be as simple as possible.

What, then, may we suppose the consequent feeling to be?

It will, I conceive, be a simple feeling of the kind already spoken of, as capable of arising from the affection of a single point of our organ of touch,—a feeling that varies indeed with the quantity of pressure as the sensation of fragrance varies with the number of the odorous particles, but involves as little the notion of extension, as that notion is involved in the mere fragrance of a violet or a rose. The connexion of this original tactual feeling, however, with that of extension, is now so indissoluble, as, indeed, it could not fail to become, in the circumstance in which it has uniformly arisen, that it is almost impossible to conceive it as separate. We may perhaps, however, make a near approach to the conception of it, by using the gentle gradual pressure of a small pointed body, which, in the various slight feelings, excited by it,—before it penetrate the cuticle, or cause any considerable pain,—may represent, in some measure, the simple and immediate effect, which pressure in any case produces,—exclusively of the associate feelings which it indirectly suggests.

Those who have the curiosity to try the experiment, with any small bodies, not absolutely pointed,—such as the head of a pin, or any body of similar dimensions,—will be astonished to feel, how very slightly, if at all, the notion of extension, or figure, is involved in the feeling, even after all the intimate associations of our experience;—certainly far less than the notion of longitudinal distance seems to us to be involved in the immediate affections of our sense of sight.

But the pressure of such a large body as the cube, which we have supposed to be pressed against our organ of touch, now awakens very different feelings. We perceive, as it were immediately, *form* and *hardness*. May not, then, the knowledge of resistance and extension, and consequently the belief of the essential qualities of matter, be originally communicated by the affections of this organ?

The feeling of *resistance*,—to begin with this,—is, I conceive, to be

ascribed, not to our organ of touch, but to our muscular frame, as forming a distinct organ of sense ; the affections of which, particularly as existing in combination with other feelings, and modifying our judgments concerning these, (as in the case of distant vision, for example,) are not less important than those of our other sensitive organs. The sensations of this class, are, indeed, in common circumstances, so obscure, as to be scarcely heeded or remembered ; but there is probably no contraction, even of a single muscle, which is not attended with some faint degree of sensation, that distinguishes it from the contraction of other muscles, or from other degrees of contraction of the same muscle. Each motion of the visible limb, whether produced by one or more of the invisible muscles, is accompanied with a certain feeling, that may be complex, indeed, as arising from various muscles, but which is considered by the mind as one ; and it is this particular feeling, accompanying the particular visible motion,—whether the feeling and the invisible parts contracted be truly simple or compound,—which we distinguish from every other feeling accompanying every other quantity of contraction. It is as if a man, born blind, were to walk, for the first time, in a flower garden. He would distinguish the fragrance of one parterre from the fragrance of another, though he might be altogether ignorant of the separate odours united in each ; and might even consider as one simple perfume, what was, in truth, the mingled product of a thousand.

Obscure as our muscular sensations are in common circumstances, there are other circumstances in which they make themselves abundantly manifest. It is sufficient to refer to phenomena of which every one must have been conscious innumerable times, and which imply no disease nor lasting difference of state. What is the feeling of fatigue, for example, but a muscular feeling ? that is to say, a feeling of which our muscles are as truly the organ, as our eye or ear is the organ of sight or hearing. When a limb has been long exercised, without sufficient intervals of rest, the repetition of the contraction of its muscles is accompanied, not with a slight and obscure sensation, but with one which amounts, if it be gradually increased, to severe pain, and which, before it arrives at this, has passed progressively through various stages of uneasiness. Even when there has been no previous fatigue, we cannot make a single powerful effort at any time, without being sensible of the muscular feeling connected with this effort. Of the pleasure which attends more moderate exercise, every one must have been conscious in himself, even in his years of maturity, when he



seldom has recourse to it for the pleasure alone; and must remember, still more, the happiness which it afforded him in other years, when happiness was of less costly and laborious production than at present. By that admirable provision, with which Nature accommodates the blessings which she gives, to the wants that stand in need of them, she has, in that early period,—when the pleasure of mental freedom, and the ambitions of busy life, are necessarily excluded,—made ample amends to the little slave of affections, in that disposition to spontaneous pleasure, which renders it almost an effort to be sad, as if existence itself were delight; giving him a fund of independent happiness in the very air which she has poured around him, and the ready limbs which move through it almost without his bidding. In that beautiful passage, in which Goldsmith describes the sounds that come in one mingled murmur from the village, who does not feel the force of the happiness which is comprised in the single line, that speaks of

“The playful children, just let loose from school?”\*

It is not the mere freedom from the intellectual task, of which we think; it is much more that burst of animal pleasure, which is felt in every limb, when the long constraint that has repressed it is removed, and the whole frame is given once more to all the freedom of nature.

With the same happy provision with which she has considered the young of our own species, Nature has, in the other animals, whose sources of general pleasure are still more limited than in the child, converted their muscular frame into an organ of delight. It is not in search of richer pasture, that the horse gallops over his field, or the goat leaps from rock to rock; it is for the luxury of the exercise itself. It is this appearance of happy life which spreads a charm over every little group with which Nature animates her scenery; and he who can look without interest on the young lamb, as it frolics around the bush, may gaze, indeed, on the magnificent landscape as it opens before him,—but it will be with an eye which looks languidly, and in vain, for pleasure which it cannot find.

Our muscular frame is not merely a part of the living machinery of motion; but is also truly an *organ of sense*. When I move my arm, without resistance, I am conscious of a certain feeling; when the motion is impeded by the presence of an external body, I am conscious of a different feeling, arising partly, indeed, from the mere sense of

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\* *Deserted Village*, v. 120.

touch, in the moving limb compressed, but not consisting merely in this compression, since, when the same pressure is made by a foreign force, without any muscular effort on my part, my general feeling is very different. It is the feeling of this resistance to our progressive effort, (combined, perhaps, with the mere tactual feeling) which forms what we term our feeling of *solidity*, or *hardness*; and without it the tactual feeling would be nothing more than a sensation indifferent or agreeable, or disagreeable or severely painful, according to the force of the pressure, in the particular case; in the same way as the matter of heat, acting in different degrees on this very organ of touch, and on different portions of its surface at different times, produces all the intermediate sensations, agreeable, disagreeable, or indifferent, from the pain of excessive cold, to the pain of burning; and produces them in like manner, without suggesting the presence of any solid body, external to ourselves.

Were the cube, therefore, in the case supposed, pressed for the first time on the hand, it would excite a certain sensation, indeed, but not that of resistance, which always implies a muscular effort that is resisted, and consequently not that of hardness, which is a mode of resistance. It would be very different, however, if we fairly made the attempt to press against it; for then our effort would be impeded, and the consequent feeling of resistance would arise; which, as co-existing in this case, and in every case of effort, with the particular sensation of touch, might afterwards be suggested by it, on the simple recurrence of the same sensation of touch, so as to excite the notion of hardness in the body touched, without the renewal of any muscular effort on our part, in the same manner as the angular surfaces of the cube, if we chance to turn our eye upon it, are suggested by the mere plane of colour, which it presents to our immediate vision, and which is all that our immediate vision would, of itself, have made known to us. The feeling of resistance, then, it will be admitted, and consequently of hardness, and all the other modes of resistance, is a muscular, not a tactual feeling.

But though the resistance or hardness of the cube, as implying some counter effort, may not be immediately sensible to our superficial organ of touch, are not its dimensions so perceived? Its cubical form, it will be allowed, cannot be felt, as only one of its surfaces is supposed to be pressed upon the hand; but, is not at least this square surface perceived immediately? In short, does not touch, originally and immediately, convey to us the knowledge of *extension*?

With our present complete belief of external things, indeed, and

especially of our organs of sense, the most important of these, the origin of our knowledge of extension seems to us a matter of very easy explanation. The square surface presses on our organ of touch,—it affects not a single physical point merely, but a portion of the organ, corresponding exactly in surface with itself; and the perception of the similar square, it will be said, thus immediately arises. But, in all this easy explanation, it is very strangely forgotten, that the *feeling*, whatever it may be, which the impression of the square surface produces, is not itself the square configuration of our tactual organ corresponding with that surface, but the state of a very different substance, which is as little square, as it is round or elliptical,—which is indeed, from its own absolute simplicity, incapable of resemblance in shape to any thing; and the resemblance of which, therefore, to the shape of the mere organ, is as little to be expected in the sensations of touch,—as that other state of mind, which constitutes the sensation of the fragrance of a rose, can be expected to resemble the shape of the odorous particles themselves, or of the organ of smell, which is affected by them. The very knowledge which touch is supposed to give, is in this case most inconsistently assumed, as existing in the mind, before the very touch which is supposed to give it. If, indeed, the mind could know, that a part of its external corporeal organ is compressed into the form of a square, or that another square surface is compressing that organ, the difficulty would be at an end; for it would then, most undoubtedly, have that very knowledge of extension, the origin of which we seek. But it is not explained, how the mind, which alone can have sensation or knowledge, and which certainly is not square itself, is to be made acquainted with the squareness of its own corporeal organ, or of the foreign body; nor, indeed, how the squareness of the mere external organ should produce this particular affection of the mind, more than if the organ were compressed into the shape of a polygon of one thousand sides.

Let it be supposed, that, when a small cube is pressed on the hand, one hundred physical points of the organ of touch are affected in a certain manner. We have, it is said, an immediate perception of a square surface. Let it next be supposed, that, instead of one hundred of these continuous points of the organ, an equal number of points, at various distances in the surface of the body, are affected in the same manner. On this supposition it will scarcely be said, that the perception of a square would arise, when there is no square, more than any other imaginable form, in the space comprehended in the pressure.

Yet what difference is there in these two cases, to a mind that is, by supposition, absolutely ignorant of every bodily organ, and consequently alike ignorant of the nearness or distance of the points of the organ of touch? In both cases, one hundred points, equally sensible, are affected, and are affected precisely in the same manner; and there is truly no difference, unless we tacitly suppose the mind to be conscious of the bodily frame, and therefore of the continuity of certain points of the organ of touch, with the other points that are proximate to them,—a sort of knowledge, for which it would not be easy to account, and which it is impossible to conceive, without conceding the very point in question. A little attentive reflection on the circumstances of these two cases, will perhaps save our minds from the illusive belief, that the continuity and similarity of shape, which are known to us the inquirers, are known also to that little sentient being, whose first elements of knowledge we are endeavouring to trace.

We are too apt to forget, in inquiries of this sort, that it is not in our organ of touch merely, that a certain extent of the nervous extremity of our sensorial organ is affected. This occurs equally in every other organ. In the superficial expansion of the nerves of hearing, smell, taste, for example, it is not a point merely that is affected, but a number of continuous points, precisely as in the superficial organ of touch; and if, therefore, the notion of extension in general, or of figure, which is limited extension, arose whenever a part of the nervous expansion was affected in any way, we should derive these notions as much from a taste, or a smell, or a sound, as from any of the configurations or affections of our organ of touch.

It is not, therefore, merely because a certain limited part of the sensorial organ is affected, that we have the notion of the square surface, in the case supposed; for, if this alone were necessary, we should have square inches, and half inches, and various other forms, rectilinear or curvilinear, of fragrance and sound.

But it may perhaps be urged, though all our organs must, indeed, exist equally with our organ of touch of a certain shape when affected, —and though the sensorial figure of our other organs is not accompanied with any of those mental affections, which constitute the perception of angular or curvilinear figure, there is something in the nature of that part of the sensorial organ, which terminates on the general surface of the body, that impresses the mind, immediately, with a sensation, corresponding with the exact figure, in which the organ may itself exist. When the square, therefore, in the case imagined by us, is

impressed upon the organ, the mental affection which constitutes our notion of a square may immediately arise, though it would not arise from the similar squareness of our organs of smell or hearing.

In answer to this mere supposition, I may remark, that the sensorial organ of touch exists, at every moment, of a certain shape, and that we yet have no perception of this shape, so as to be able to delineate the whole extent of our tactual organ, in the same manner as we could delineate the impressing square, in the case supposed; or if it be said that the configuration of the organ does not excite this mental affection, in the quiescent state of the part, but only when it is itself affected, I may remark, that we are as little able to delineate its figure, when we are exposed to the action of heat, which yet acts most powerfully upon this very organ, inducing sensations at least as vivid as those of hardness or figure.

It may still, however, be contended, that, though the organ of touch has no effect in this way, merely as configured, and might, in any other configuration, operate precisely in the same manner on the sentient mind,—still the harmony of the bodily and mental changes is so arranged by nature, that the organic state in touch, whatever it may be, is immediately followed by the knowledge of the extension of the impressing body,—in the same manner as a certain state of the organ of smell, whatever that state may be, is immediately followed by that affection of the mind which constitutes our sensation of the fragrance of a rose. Though this argument, in truth, rather begs the question, than attempts to meet it, let us give to it all the force which it may claim. The accurate determination of the point, may, indeed, seem at first almost impossible; since in whatever manner the seeming perception may arise, it must be admitted, that we now seem to perceive extension, as it were immediately, by touch; though not more immediately than in vision we seem to perceive the positions of objects in different distances before our eyes.—But there is, fortunately, at least one test, which the point in question still admits. If the apparent perception of extension by touch, be truly and originally immediate, and not acquired, like the apparent perception of distance in vision, so as to involve a sort of intellectual measurement or suggestion of some sort, after the primary sensation,—the perception must be constant and universal, not confined to a few simple and familiar forms, which, if we can distinguish these alone, we may be supposed to have learned from experience, but extending to forms of every kind; for it would certainly be a very strange abuse of the license of supposition to

imagine that we perceive a square immediately, but not a circle, or a circle but not a square, or indeed any other figure. Even at present, then, though the circumstances of the trial,—when the experience of many years must have exhausted so many varieties of form, associating the notion of these with the particular tactual feeling, whatever that may be,—are surely very unfavourable to the opinion which I maintain,—even at present, I may safely trust to experiment, the determination of the question. When a body which we do not see, is pressed on any part of our tactual organ, do we immediately discover its form,—as immediately, as we are sensible of fragrance, when our organ of smell is in a healthy state, and an odoriferous body is presented to it, or of sound, when a cannon is fired beside us? This we certainly should do, if figure were as direct an object of the sense of touch, as fragrance and sound are of the senses of smell and hearing. Even though it be a form of the simplest kind, square, round, triangular, that is thus pressed upon our palm, we scarcely distinguish the precise species of figure for a moment, and are long before we can convince ourselves, that we have perceived its exact magnitude, in the determination of which, after all, we shall very probably err, if we confine ourselves to the mere intellectual measurement; though we should even add to the immediate sensation of touch, all the discriminating skill of our judgment and reflection. But if the body be irregular in form,—however slight the irregularity may be, and of a species that would not perplex in the slightest degree our sense of sight, and which certainly, therefore, should perplex as little our sense of touch, which is supposed to be still more immediately perceptive of form,—we are incapable altogether, of fixing, with precision, its magnitude and figure,—that very magnitude and figure which are yet said to be the direct objects of touch. Of this a single trial may convince any one. Are we then entitled to say, in the case of the square surface of the cube pressed upon our hand, that though we cannot discover other forms and magnitudes, we yet discover its extension, and consequently its figure, by the immediate sense of touch?—or may we not rather conclude with confidence, that what is true of other forms is true of this also, that it is only in consequence of more frequent experience we have learned, as it were, to distinguish, with some degree of certainty, the simpler forms, which, as mere forms, are not more direct objects of the sense of touch than forms the most irregular, and that without such experience, therefore, our mere sense of touch is incapable of informing us of the figure of bodies, immediately and originally?

If then the knowledge of extension be not derived from our immediate sense of touch, it must be derived from some other source, which allows it to be associated with the feelings of touch, and afterwards suggested by these, in the same manner as distant extent, in the case of vision, is suggested by a few slight varieties of colour. Let us endeavour, then, since some such source there must be, to discover what the source is.

## SECTION II.

That we now seem to perceive extension, immediately by touch, cannot be denied; and, in a case so obscure as this,—with our very limited knowledge, and our very limited power of adding to this knowledge,—it may seem the most prudent, and perhaps even the most suitable,—as it is, without all question, by far the easiest part,—to acquiesce in the opinion, that the perception, which now seems immediate, was so originally,—that the belief of the presence of an external figured body, is, by the very constitution of our nature, attached to a certain affection of the mere organ of touch. But, since there are circumstances,—as we have seen,—which show this opinion, when very nicely examined, to be inadmissible, we may, at least, attempt to proceed a little farther, if we do this with a sufficient sense of the very great difficulty of the attempt, in relation to our power and knowledge, and consequently with a very humble assurance, as to the certainty of any opinion which we may be led to form. To know the mind *well*, is to know its *weakness* as well as its *powers*; and it is precisely in a case of this sort, that he whose knowledge is least imperfect, will be the best judge of its imperfection, and, therefore, the least disposed to put complete reliance on it in his own speculations,—or to assert it dogmatically, when he offers it, as all opinions, on so very obscure a subject, should be offered, to the inquiry, rather than to the undoubting assent.

The proof, that our perception of extension by touch, is not an original and immediate perception of that sense, is altogether independent of the success of any endeavour which may be made, to discover the elements of the compound perception. It would not be less true, that touch does not afford it, though we should be incapable of pointing out any other source, from which it can be supposed to be derived.

To those who are wholly unacquainted with the theory of vision, nothing certainly can seem more absurd than the assertion, that we

see, not with our eyes merely, but chiefly by the medium of another organ, which the blind possess in as great perfection as ourselves, and which at the moment of vision, may perhaps be absolutely at rest. It will not be surprising, therefore, though the element which seems to me to form the most important constituent of our notion of extension should in the same manner seem a very unlikely one.

This element is our feeling of *succession*, or *time*,—a feeling, which necessarily involves the notion of divisibility or series of parts, that is so essential a constituent of our more complex notion of matter,—and to which notion of continuous divisibility, if the notion of resistance be added, it is scarcely possible for us to imagine, that we should not have acquired, by this union, the very notion of physical extension,—that which has parts, and that which resists our effort to grasp it.

That *memory* is a part of our mental constitution, and that we are thus capable of thinking of a series of feelings, as successive to each other, the experience of every moment teaches us sufficiently. This succession frequently repeated, suggests immediately, or implies the notion of length, not metaphorically, as is commonly said, but as absolutely as extension itself; and, the greater the number of the successive feelings may have been, the greater does this length appear. It is not possible for us to look back on the years of our life, since they form truly a progressive series, without regarding them as a sort of length, which is more distinct indeed, the nearer the succession of feelings, may be to the moment at which we consider them, but which, however remote, is still felt by us as *one continued length*, in the same manner, as when, after a journey of many hundred miles, we look back, in our memory, on the distance over which we have passed, we see, as it were, a long track of which some parts, particularly the nearer parts are sufficiently distinct, but of which the rest seems lost in a sort of distant obscurity. The line of our long journeying,—or, in other words, that almost immeasurable line of plains, hills, declivities, marshes, bridges, woods,—to endeavour to comprehend which in our thought, seems an effort as fatiguing as the very journey itself,—we know well, can be divided, into those various parts; and, in like manner, the progressive line of time—or, in other words, the continued succession, of which the joy, the hope, the fragrance, the regret, the melody, the fear, and innumerable other affections of the mind, were parts, we feel that we can mentally divide into those separate portions of the train. Continuous *length* and *divisibility*, those great elementary notions of space, and of all that space contains, are thus found in every succes-



sion of our feelings. There is no language in which time is not described as long or short,—not from any metaphor—for no mere arbitrary metaphor can be thus universal and inevitable, as a form of human thought—but because it is truly impossible for us to consider succession, without this notion of progressive divisibility attached to it; and it appears to us as absurd to suppose, that by adding, to our retrospect of a week, the events of the month preceding, we do not truly lengthen the succession, as it would be to suppose, that we do not lengthen the line of actual distance, by adding, to the few last stages of a long journey, the many stages that preceded it.

That which is progressive must have *parts*. Time, or succession, then involves the very notions of longitudinal extension and divisibility, and involves these, without the notion of any thing external to the mind itself;—for though the mind of man had been susceptible only of joy, grief, fear, hope, and the other varieties of internal feeling, without the possibility of being affected by external things, he would still have been capable of considering these feelings, as successive to each other, in a long continued progression, divisible into separate parts. The notions of length, then, and of divisibility, are not confined to external things, but are involved in that very memory, by which we consider the series of the past,—not in the memory of distant events only, but in those first successions of feeling, by which the mind originally became conscious of its own permanence and identity. The notion of time, then, is precisely coeval with that of the mind itself; since it is implied in the knowledge of succession, by which alone the mind acquires the knowledge of its own reality, as something more than the mere sensation of the present moment.

Conceiving the notion of *time*, therefore, that is to say, of feelings past and present, to be thus one of the earliest notions which the infant mind can form, so as to precede its notions of external things, and to involve the notions of length and divisibility, I am inclined to reverse exactly the process commonly supposed; and, instead of deriving the measure of time from extension, to derive the knowledge and original measure of extension from time. That one notion or feeling of the mind may be united indissolubly with other feelings, with which it has frequently co-existed, and to which, but for this co-existence, it would seem to have no common relation, is sufficiently shown by the phenomena of vision.

In what manner, however, is the notion of time peculiarly associated with the simple sensation of touch, so as to form, with it, the perception

of extension? We are able, in the theory of vision, to point out the co-existence of sensations which produce the subsequent union, that renders the perception of distance apparently immediate. If a similar co-existence of the original sensations of touch, with the notion of continued and divisible succession, cannot be pointed out in the present case, the opinion which asserts it, must be considered merely as a wild and extravagant conjecture.

The source of such a co-existence is not merely to be found, but is at least as obvious, as that which is universally admitted in the case of vision.

To proceed, then,—The hand is the great organ of touch. It is composed of various articulations, that are easily moveable, so as to adapt it readily to changes of shape, in accommodation to the shape of the bodies which it grasps. If we shut our hand gradually, or open it gradually, we find a certain series of feelings, varying with each degree of the opening or closing, and giving the notion of succession of a certain length. In like manner, if we gradually extend our arms, in various directions, or bring them nearer to us again, we find that each degree of the motion is accompanied with a feeling that is distinct, so as to render us completely conscious of the progression. The gradual closing of the hand, therefore, must necessarily give a succession of feelings,—a succession, which, of itself, might, or rather must, furnish the notion of length in the manner before stated, the length being different, according to the degree of the closing; and the gradual stretching out of the arm gives a succession of feelings, which, in like manner, must furnish the notion of length,—the length being different according to the degree of the stretching of the arm. To those who have had opportunities of observing infants, I need not say, how much use, or rather what constant use, the future inquirer makes of his little fingers and arms; by the frequent contraction of which, and the consequent renewal of the series of feelings involved in each gradual contraction, he cannot fail to become so well acquainted with the progress, as to distinguish each degree of contraction, and, at last, after innumerable repetitions, to associate with each degree the notion of a certain length of succession. The particular contraction, therefore, when thus often repeated, becomes the representative of a certain length, in the same manner as shades of colour in vision become ultimately representative of distance,—the same principle of association, which forms the combination in the one case, operating equally in the other.

In these circumstances of acquired knowledge,—after the series of muscular feelings, in the voluntary closing of the hand, has become so familiar, that the whole series is anticipated and expected, as soon as the motion has begun,—when a ball, or any other substance, is placed for the first time in the infant's hand, he feels that he can no longer perform the usual contraction,—or, in other words, since he does not fancy that he has muscles which are contracted, he feels that the usual series of sensations does not follow his will to renew it,—he knows how much of the accustomed succession is still remaining ; and the notion of this particular length, which was expected, and interrupted by a new sensation, is thus associated with the particular tactual feeling excited by the pressure of the ball,—the greater or less magnitude of the ball preventing a greater or less portion of the series of feelings in the accustomed contraction. By the frequent repetition of this tactual feeling, as associated with that feeling which attends a certain progress of contraction, the two feelings at last flow together, as in the acquired perceptions of vision ; and when the process has been repeated with various bodies innumerable times, it becomes, at last, as impossible to separate the mere tactual feeling from the feeling of length, as to separate the whiteness of a sphere, in vision, from that convexity of the sphere, which the eye, of itself, would have been for ever incapable of perceiving.

As yet, however, the only dimension of the knowledge of which we have traced the origin, is mere length ; and it must still be explained, how we acquire the knowledge of the other dimensions. If we had had but one muscle, it seems to me very doubtful whether it would have been possible for us, to have associated with touch any other notion than that of mere length. But nature has made provision for giving us a wider knowledge, in the various muscles, which she has distributed over different parts, so as to enable us to perform motions in various directions at the same instant, and thus to have co-existing series of feelings, each of which series was before considered as involving the notion of length. The infant bends one finger gradually on the palm of his hand ; the finger, thus brought down, touches one part of the surface of the palm, producing a certain affection of the organ of touch, and a consequent sensation ; and he acquires the notion of a certain length, in the remembered succession of muscular feelings during the contraction ;—he bends another finger ; it, too, touches a certain part of the surface of the palm, producing a certain feeling of touch, that co-exists and combines, in like manner, with the remembrance of a certain succession of muscular feelings. When

both fingers move together, the co-existence of the two series of successive feelings, with each of which the mind is familiar, gives the notion of co-existing lengths, which receive a sort of unity, from the proximity in succession of the tactual feelings in the contiguous parts of the palm which they touch,—feelings, which have before been found to be proximate, when the palm has been repeatedly pressed along a surface, and the tactual feelings of these parts, which the closing fingers touch at the same moment, were always immediately successive,—as immediately successive, as any of the muscular feelings in the series of contraction. When a body is placed in the infant's hand, and its little fingers are bent by it as before, sometimes one finger only is impeded in its progress, sometimes two, sometimes three,—and he thus adds to the notion of mere length, which would have been the same, whatever number of fingers had been impeded, the notion of a certain number of proximate and co-existing lengths, which is the very notion of breadth; and with these, according as the body is larger or smaller, is combined always the tactual affection produced by the pressure of the body, on more, or fewer, of the interior parts of the palm, and fingers, which had before become, of themselves, representative of certain lengths, in the manner described; and the concurrence of these three varieties of length, in the single feeling of resistance, in which they all seem to meet, when an incompressible body is placed within the sphere of the closing fingers,—however rude the notions of concurring dimensions may be, or rather must be, as at first formed,—seems at least to afford the rude elements, from which, by the frequent repetition of the feeling of resistance, together with the proximate lengths, of which it has become representative, clearer notions of the kind may gradually arise.

The progressive contractions of the various muscles which move the arms as affording similar successions of feelings, may be considered in precisely the same light, as sources of the knowledge of extension; and, by their motion in various directions, at the same time with the motion of the fingers, they concur powerfully, in modifying, and correcting, the information received from these. The whole hand is brought, by the motion of the arm, to touch one part of the face or body; it is then moved, so as to touch another part, and with the frequent succession of the simple feelings of touch, in these parts, is associated the feeling of the intervening *length*, derived from the sensations that accompanied the progressive contraction of the arm. But the motion is not always the same; and, as the same feeling of touch,

in one part, is thus followed by various feelings of touch in different parts, with various series of muscular feelings between, the notion of length in various directions, that is to say, of length in various series commencing from one power, is obtained in another way. That the knowledge of extension, or in other words, the association of the notion of succession with the simple feelings of touch, will be rude and indistinct at first, I have already admitted ; but it will gradually become more and more distinct and precise ; as we can have no doubt, that the perception of distance by the eye is, in the first stages of visual association, very indistinct, and becomes clearer after each repeated trial. For many weeks or months, all is confusion in the visual perceptions, as much as in the tactual and muscular. Indeed, we have abundant evidence of this continued progress of vision, even in mature life, when, in certain professions that require nice perceptions of distance, the power of perception itself, by the gradual acquisitions which it obtains from experience, seems to unfold itself more and more, in proportion to the wants that require it.

It may be thought that the notion of *time*, or *succession*, is, in this instance, a superfluous incumbrance of the theory, and that the same advantage might be obtained, by supposing the muscular feelings themselves, independently of the notion of their succession, to be connected with the notion of particular lengths. But this opinion, it must be remarked, would leave the difficulty precisely as before ; and sufficient evidence in confutation of it, may be found in a very simple experiment, which it is in the power of any one to make. The experiment I cannot but consider as of the more value, since it seems to me strongly corroborative of the theory which I have ventured to propose ; for it shows, that, even after all the acquisitions which our sense of touch has made, the notion of extension is still modified, in a manner the most striking and irresistible, by the mere change of accustomed *time*. Let any one, with his eyes shut, move his hand, with moderate velocity, along a part of a table, or any other hard smooth surface ; the portion over which he presses, will appear of a certain length ; let him move his hand more rapidly, the portion of the surface pressed will appear less ; let him move his hand very slowly, and the length, according to the degree of the slowness, will appear increased, in a most wonderful proportion. In this case, there is precisely the same quantity of muscular contraction, and the same quantity of the organ of touch compressed, whether the motion be rapid, moderate, or slow. The only circumstance of difference is the time occupied in the succession of the

feelings ; and this difference is sufficient to give complete diversity to the notion of length.

If any one, with his eyes shut, suffer his hand to be guided by another, very slowly along any surface unknown to him, he will find it impossible to form any accurate guess as to its length. But it is not necessary, that we should be previously unacquainted with the extent of surface, along which the motion is performed ; for the illusion will be nearly the same, and the experiment, of course, be still more striking, when the motion is along a surface with which we are perfectly familiar, as a book which we hold in our hand, or a desk at which we are accustomed to sit.

This experiment is well fitted to show the influence of mere difference of time, in our estimation of longitudinal extent. It is an experiment, tried, unquestionably, in most unfavourable circumstances, when our tactual feelings, representative of extension, are so strongly fixed, by the long experience of our life ; and yet, even now, it will be found, on moving the hand, slowly and rapidly, along the same extent of surface, though with precisely the same degree of pressure in both cases, that it is as difficult to conceive the extent, thus slowly and rapidly traversed, to be the same, as it is difficult to conceive the extent of visual distance to be exactly the same, when we look alternately through the different ends of an inverted telescope. If, when all other circumstances are the same, the different visual feelings, arising from difference of the mere direction of light, be representative of length in the one case,—the longer or shorter succession of time, when all other circumstances are the same, has surely as much reason to be considered as representative of it, in the other case.

Are we, then, to believe, that the feeling of extension, or in other words, of the definite figure of bodies, is a *simple* feeling of touch, immediate, original, and independent of time ; or is there not rather reason to think, that it is a *compound* feeling, of which *time*, that is to say, our notion of succession, is an *original element* ?

### SECTION III.

Though the notion of *extension*, however, may arise in the manner which I have supposed, this, it may be said, is not the notion of *external existence*. To what, then, are we to ascribe the belief of external reality, which now accompanies our sensations of touch ? It appears

to me to depend on the feeling of resistance, which, breaking in without any known cause of difference on an accustomed series, and combining with the notion of extension, and consequently of divisibility, previously acquired, furnishes the elements of that compound notion, which we term the notion of *matter*. *Extension, resistance*,—to combine these simple notions in something which is not ourselves, and to have the notion of matter, are precisely the same thing; as it is the same thing to have combined the head and neck of a man with the body and legs of a horse, and to have the notion of that fabulous being, which the ancients denominated a *centaur*. It certainly, at least, would not be easy for any one to define matter more simply, than as that which has parts, and that which resists our effort to grasp it; and, in our analysis of the feelings of infancy, we have been able to discover how both these notions may have arisen in the mind, and arisen, too, in circumstances, which must lead to the combination of them in one complex notion.

The infant stretches out his arm for the first time, by that volition without a known object, which is either a mere instinct, or very near akin to one,—this motion is accompanied with a certain feeling,—he repeats the volition which moves his arm fifty or one thousand times, and the same progress of feeling takes place during the muscular action. In this repeated progress, he feels the truth of that intuitive proposition, which, in the whole course of the life that awaits him, is to be the source of all his expectations, and the guide of all his actions,—the simple proposition, that what has been as an antecedent, will be followed by what has been as a consequent. At length he stretches out his arm again, and instead of the accustomed progression, there arises, in the resistance of some object opposed to him, a feeling of a very different kind, which, if he perseveres in his voluntary effort, increases gradually to severe pain, before he has half completed the usual progress. There is a difference, therefore, which we may, without any absurdity, suppose to astonish the little reasoner; for the expectation of similar consequents, from similar antecedents, is observable even in his earliest actions, and is probably the result of an original law of mind, as universal as that which renders certain sensations of sight and sound the immediate result of certain affections of our eye or ear. To any being who is thus impressed with belief of similarities of sequence, a different consequent necessarily implies a difference of the antecedent. In the case at present supposed, however, the infant, who as yet knows nothing but himself, is conscious of no previous

difference ; and the feeling of resistance seems to him, therefore, something unknown, which has its cause in something that is not himself.

I am aware, that the application to an infant, of a process of reasoning expressed in terms of such grave and formal philosophic nomenclature, has some chance of appearing ridiculous. But the *reasoning* itself is very different from the *terms* employed to express it, and is truly as simple and natural, as the terms, which our language obliges us to employ in expressing it, are abstract and artificial. The infant, however, in his feelings of similarity of antecedents and consequents, and of the necessity, therefore, of a new antecedent, where the consequent is different, has the *reasoning* but not the *terms*. He does not form the proposition as universal, and applicable to cases that have not yet existed ; but he *feels* it in every particular case, as it occurs.

That the notions of extension and external resistance, which are thus supposed to be acquired from the progressive contraction of muscles, and the difficulty opposed to their accustomed contraction, which introduces suddenly a new feeling, when all the antecedent feelings had been the same, should be directly combined, only with the sensations of touch, cannot appear wonderful, when we reflect, that it is only in the case of touch, there is that frequent *co-existence* or immediate succession, which is necessary to the subsequent union. In the case of the acquired perceptions of vision, it might, in like manner, be asked, Why is it that we do not smell the exact distance of a rose, as we see its exact distance, as soon as we have turned our eye on the bush on which the rose is growing ? And the only answer which can be given is, that there has not been in smell that exact and frequent co-existence of feeling which has occurred in vision. It surely is not more wonderful, therefore, that the same argument should hold in the acquired perceptions of touch, in which the co-existence is still more frequent and exact. When we listen to a flute, our muscles may be contracted as before, or quiescent as before ; when the odour of a rose is wafted to us, not a single muscle may be more or less affected. But, without the action of the muscles, we cannot grasp a ball, nor press against a resisting body, nor move our hand along its surface. Whatever feelings, therefore, are involved in muscular contraction, may be, or rather, if the common laws of association operate, must be associated with the simple feelings thus constantly co-existing, whatever they may be, which the organ of touch originally affords. To suppose, that, in a case of such frequent co-existence or succession, no association takes place, and that our feelings of touch, are, at this



moment, as simple as they were originally, would surely be to suppose the universal influence of the associating principle to be suspended in this particular case.

From this view of the subject it appears, that it is not by any peculiar intuition, we are led to believe in the existence of things without. I consider this belief as the effect of that more general intuition, by which we consider a new consequent, in any series of accustomed events, as the sign of a new antecedent, and of that equally general principle of association, by which feelings that have frequently co-existed, flow together, and constitute afterwards one complex whole. There is something which is not ourself, something which is representative of length,—something which excites the feeling of resistance to our effort; and these elements combined, are matter. But, whether the notion arise in the manner supposed, or differently, there can be no doubt that it has arisen, long before the period to which our memory reaches; and the belief of an external world, therefore, whether founded directly on an intuitive principle of belief, or, as I rather think, on associations as powerful as intuition in the period which alone we know, may be said to be an essential part of our mental constitution, at least as far back as that constitution can be made the subject of philosophic inquiry. Whatever it may have been originally, it is now as impossible for us to disbelieve the reality of some external cause of our sensations, as it is impossible for us to disbelieve the existence of the sensations themselves. On this subject, skepticism may be ingenious in vain; and equally vain would be the attempted confutation of *skepticism*; since it cannot affect the serious internal belief of the skeptic, which is the same before as after argument; unshaken by the ingenuity of his own reasonings, or rather, tacitly assumed and affirmed in that very combat of argument, which professes to deny it.

It is in vain that Berkeley asserts his system, with a zeal and acuteness, which might, perhaps, have succeeded in convincing others, if they could only have previously succeeded in convincing himself, not as a speculative philosopher merely, but as a human being, conversant with his kind, acting, and suffering, and remembering, and hoping, and fearing. This, however, was more than mere ingenuity of argument could perform. Even in publishing his work, with the sincere desire of instructing and converting others, the great and primary convert was yet to be made, in the converter himself.

In the *Life of Berkeley*, prefixed to the edition of his collected works, an account is given of a visit which he paid, at Paris, to Male-

branche, the celebrated author of a system, in many respects similar to his own. He found him in a weak state of health, but abundantly eager to enter into disputation, on a science which he loved, and especially on his own doctrines, which he loved still more; but the discussion was at last carried on with more vehemence than the feeble bodily frame of Malebranche could bear; and his death was said to be occasioned, or at least hastened, by this unfortunate intellectual combat. When we consider this interview of two illustrious men, each of whom, in accordance with his own system, must have been incapable of any direct knowledge of the existence of the other, the violent reciprocal action of these mutual nonentities, might seem ludicrous, if there were not, in the death of any one, and especially of a philosopher so estimable in every respect as the author of "The Search of Truth," something too serious to be consistent with any feeling of levity. It is more suitable, both to the occasion itself, and to our own intellectual weakness, to regard this accidental interview of two philosophers, contending so strenuously against each other, for the truth of doctrines, which rendered the real existence of each, at best, very problematical, as only a striking instance of the readiness with which all the pride of human reason yields itself, as it were, spontaneously and humbly, to the sway of those more powerful principles, which He, who has arranged our mutual constitution, has so graciously accommodated to the circumstances in which He has placed us. The gift of reason itself, that most inestimable of our intellectual gifts, would have been truly, if nothing more had been added to it, a perilous acquisition, to beings not absolutely incapable of error; since these are points on which a single mistake, if there had been no opportunity of repairing it, might have been fatal, not to our happiness merely, but to our very existence. On these points, however, Nature has not left us to a power so fallible, and to indolence, which might forget to exercise even this feeble power. She has given us principles which do not err, and which operate without the necessity of any effort on our part. In the wildest speculative errors, into which we may be led, there is a voice within, which speaks, indeed, only in a whisper, but in a whisper of omnipotence, at which the loud voice that led us astray, is still,—thus operating on our mind, as the secret irresistible influence of gravitation operates on our body, preserving it, amid all the disorder and irregularity of its spontaneous motions, still attached to that earthly home which has been prepared with every bountiful provision for our temporary residence

If there were, indeed, any skeptic as to the existence of an external world, who could seriously profess that his practical conduct was in accordance with his speculative disbelief, we might very justly exercise, with respect to his own profession, that philosophic doubt or disbelief, which he recommends. Pyrrho, the great founder of this philosophy, is, indeed, said to have acted so truly on his principles, that if a cart ran against him, or a dog attacked him, or if he came upon a precipice he would not stir a foot to avoid the danger. "But his attendants," says Dr. Reid, "who happily for him, were not so great skeptics, took care to keep him out of harm's way, so that he lived till he was ninety years of age."\* In all these cases, we may safely take for granted, that this venerable skeptic, when he exhibited himself with his domestics, knew, at least as well as the spectator, the nature of the comedy which he was acting, for their entertainment, and his own imagined glory;—that he could discriminate, with perfect accuracy, the times when it would be safe, and the times when it would be unsafe, for him to be consistent;—and that he would never feel, in so strong and lively a manner, the force of his own principles, as when he was either absolutely alone, or with attendants within a very few inches of the ground on which he was philosophizing. We are told accordingly, that when his passions were too strongly roused, to allow him to remember the part which he was acting, he entered with sufficient readiness into his native character of a mere human being. Of this, one ludicrous instance is recorded, in which his anger against his cook so completely got the better, both of his moral and physical philosophy, that, with the spit in his hand, and the meat on it, which had been roasting, he pursued him to the very market-place. Many stories of this sort, however, we may well suppose, would be invented against philosophers, of a class, that at once challenged the opposition of the whole mob of mankind, and afforded subjects of that obvious and easy ridicule, which the mob of mankind, even without the provocation of such a challenge, are always sufficiently ready to seize.

Into a detail of the skeptical system of Berkeley, it is unnecessary to enter at any length; since notwithstanding the general acuteness which its truly illustrious author has displayed in this, and in all his works, I cannot but consider his *ideal system*, as presenting a very imperfect and inaccurate view, not merely of the real phenomena of the mind, but even of the skeptical argument against the existence of mat-

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\* Reid's Inquiry into the Human Mind, chap. i. sect. 5.

ter. It was not as a skeptic however, that this most devout and amiable of philosophers, to whom Pope scarcely paid a higher compliment than was strictly due, in ascribing to him "every virtue under heaven," \*—it was not as a skeptic that he was desirous of being ranked. On the contrary, I have no doubt that his system seemed to him valuable, chiefly for being, as he conceived, an antidote to skepticism, and that he was far less anxious to display acuteness, than to expose the sophistry of materialism, and to present as he thought, an additional argument for the existence of a divine omnipresent mind, which unquestionably it would have afforded, and an argument too, it must be owned, completely irresistible, if our mere ideas were what he conceived them to be. These, he evidently considered, not as *states* of the individual mind, but as *separate things* existing in it, and capable of existing in other minds, but in them alone; and it is in consequence of these assumptions, that his system, if it were to be considered as a system of skepticism, is chiefly defective. But having, as he supposed, these ideas, and conceiving that they did not perish, when they ceased to exist in his mind, since the same ideas recurred at intervals, he deduced from the necessity which there seemed for some *omnipresent mind*, in which they might exist during the intervals of recurrence, the necessary existence of the Deity; and if, indeed, as he supposed, ideas be something different from the mind itself, recurring only at intervals to created minds, and incapable of existing but in mind, the demonstration of some infinite omnipresent mind, in which they exist during these intervals of recurrence to finite minds, must be allowed to be perfect. The precise nature of the argument, and its demonstrative force, if the hypothetical circumstances which Berkeley himself was far from considering as hypothetical, be admitted, have not been sufficiently regarded by philosophers, when they express their astonishment, that a system, which, if not skepticism, is at least so much akin to it, or so favourable, at least, to the general sceptical spirit, should yet have been brought forward, as its truly pious author informs us, for the express purpose of combating skepticism. He is not, indeed, always a very perspicuous unfold of his own opinions, but in a passage of his third Dialogue, the series of propositions which I now have stated as constituting his demonstration, are delivered by himself, with great distinctness and brevity. "When I deny," says Philonous to Hylas, "when I deny sensible things, an existence out of the mind, I do not

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\* Epilogue to the Satires, Dial. II. v. 73.

mean *my* mind in particular, but all minds. Now, it is plain, they have an existence exterior to *my* mind, since I find them, by experience, to be independent of it. There is, therefore, some other mind wherein they exist during the intervals between the times of *my* perceiving them, as likewise they did before *my* birth, and would do after *my* supposed annihilation. And as the same is true with regard to all other finite created spirits, it necessarily follows, there is an *Omnipresent Eternal Mind*, which knows and comprehends all things, and exhibits them to our view, in such a manner, and according to such rules, as he himself hath ordained, and are by us all termed the *law of Nature*.\*

The existence of ideas as separate from the mind, and the permanent existence of these, when they have ceased to exist in the individual mind, are evidently assumptions as gratuitous as the assumption of the external existence of matter itself could have been; or rather, the permanent and independent ideas, are truly *matter*, under another name; and to believe that these foreign independent substances, which pass from mind to mind, exist in the mind, is not to *intellectualize* matter, but to *materialize* intellect. A mind containing, or capable of containing, something foreign within itself, and not merely one foreign substance, but a multitude of foreign substances, at the same moment, is no longer that simple indivisible existence, which we termed *spirit*. Any of the elementary atoms of matter is, indeed, more truly *spiritual*; the very notion of *reciency* of any kind, being as little consistent with our notion of mind, as the notion of hardness or squareness.

The whole force of the pious demonstration, therefore, which Berkeley, flattered himself with having urged irresistibly, is completely obviated, by the simple denial, that ideas are any thing more than the mind itself affected in a certain manner; since in this case, our ideas exist no longer than our mind is affected in that particular manner, which constitutes each particular idea; and, to say that our ideas exist in the divine mind, would thus be to say, only, that our mind itself exists in the divine mind. There is not the sensation of colour, in *addition* to the mind, nor the sensation of fragrance in *addition* to the mind; but, according to that juster view of the mental phenomena, which I have repeatedly stated, the sensation of colour is the *mind existing in a certain state*, and the sensation of fragrance, is the mind existing in a different state.

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\* Three Dialogues, &c. p. 109—110.

## SECTION IV.

Having described the process, which takes place in the mind, when we ascribe our sensations to their various external objects, it is not improper to examine briefly the distinction, made by Dr. Reid, between *sensation* and *perception*, to which he attached considerable importance. By *sensation* he understands the simple feeling, that immediately follows the action of an external body on any of our organs of sense, considered merely as a feeling of the mind; and by *perception*, the reference of this feeling to an external body, as its cause.

The only question of importance, in regard to this distinction, is whether perception in this sense, the reference of the sensation to its external corporeal cause,—imply, as Dr. Reid contends, a peculiar mental power, co-extensive with sensation, to be distinguished by a peculiar name in the catalogue of our faculties, or be not one of the results of a more general power, which is afterwards to be considered, by which one feeling suggests other feelings, that have formerly co-existed with it.

*Extension* and *resistance*, are the complex elements of what we term matter; and nothing is matter to our conception, or a *body*, to use the simpler synonymous term, which does not involve these elements. If we had no other sense than that of smell, and, therefore, could not have referred the sensations to any fragrant body, what, in Dr. Reid's meaning of this term, would the supposed power of perception, in these circumstances, have been? What would it have been, in like manner, if we had had only the sense of taste in sweetness and bitterness,—or of hearing in melody,—or of vision in colour,—without the capacity of knowing light as a material substance, or the bodies that vibrated, or the bodies of another kind that were sweet or bitter? It is only by the sense of touch, or, at least, by that class of perceptions which Dr. Reid ascribes to touch,—and which, therefore, though traced by us in part, to another source, I, for brevity's sake, comprehend under that term in our present discussion,—it is only by *touch* that we become acquainted with those elements which are essential to our very notion of a *body*; and to touch, therefore, in his own view of it, we must be indebted, directly or indirectly, as often as we refer the sensations of any other class to a *corporeal* cause. Even in the supposed perceptions of touch itself, however, as we have seen, the reference of our feelings to an external cause, is not demonstrative of any peculiar power of the mind, to be classed sepa-

rately from its other faculties. But when a body is first grasped, in infancy, by fingers that have been accustomed to contract without being impeded, we learn to consider the sensation as the result of a cause that is different from our own mind, because it breaks an accustomed series of feelings, in which all the antecedents, felt by us at the time, were such as were before uniformly followed by a different consequent, and were expected, therefore, to have again their usual consequent. The *cause* of the new sensation, which is thus believed to be something different from our sentient self, is regarded by us as something which has parts, and which resists our effort, that is to say, as an external body ;—because the muscular feeling, excited by the object grasped, is, in the first place, the very feeling of that which we term resistance ; and, secondly, because, by uniformly supplying the place of a definite portion of a progressive series of feelings, it becomes ultimately representative of that particular length of series, or number of parts, of which it thus uniformly supplies the place. Perception, then, even in that class of feelings by which we learn to consider ourselves as surrounded by substances extended and resisting, is only another name, as I have said, for the result of certain associations and inferences that flow from other more general principles of the mind ; and with respect to all our other sensations, it is only another name for the suggestion of these very perceptions of touch, or at least of the feelings, tactual and muscular, which are, by Dr. Reid, ascribed to that single sense. If we had been unsusceptible of these tactual and muscular feelings, and, consequently, had never conceived the existence of any thing extended and resisting till the sensation of fragrance, colour, sweetness, or sound had arisen, we should, after any one or all of these sensations, have still known as little of bodies without, as if no sensation whatever had been excited.

The distinction, then, on which Dr. Reid has founded so much, involves, in his view of it, and in the view that is generally taken of it, a false conception of the nature of the process which he describes. The two words, *sensation* and *perception*, are, indeed, very convenient for expressing, in one case, the mere existence of an external feeling,—in the other case, the reference which the percipient mind has made of this feeling to an external cause. But this reference is all, which the perception superadds to the sensation ;—and the source of the reference itself we are still left to seek, in the other principles of our intellectual nature. We have no need, however to invent a peculiar power of the mind for producing it ; since there are other princi-

ples of our nature, from which it may readily be supposed to flow,—the principle by which we are led to believe, that every new consequent, in a train of changes, must have had a new antecedent of some sort in the train,—and the principle of association, by which feelings, that have usually co-existed, suggest, or become representative of each other. With these principles, it certainly is not wonderful, that when the fragrance of a rose has uniformly affected our sense of smell, as often as the flower itself was presented to us, we should ascribe the fragrance to the flower which we have seen and handled ;—but though it would not be wonderful, that we should make it, it would indeed be wonderful, if, with these principles, we did not make that very reference for which Dr. Reid thinks it necessary to have recourse to a peculiar faculty of perception.

There is another distinction, which he has adopted from the philosophers that preceded him, and which forms an important part of his system of perception,—a distinction, that is just to a certain extent,—though not to the full extent, and in the precise manner, in which he and other writers have maintained ;—and with respect to which, therefore, it will be necessary to point out how far I conceive it to be safely admissible. I allude to the division, which has been formed of the *primary* and *secondary* qualities of matter.

“ Every one knows that extension, divisibility, figure, motion, solidity, hardness, softness, and fluidity, were by Mr. Locke called primary qualities of body ; and that sound, colour, taste, smell, and heat or cold, were called secondary qualities. Is there a just foundation for this distinction ? Is there any thing common to the primary, which belongs not to the secondary ? And what is it ?

“ I answer, that there appears to me to be a real foundation for the distinction ; and it is this : That our senses give us a direct and a distinct notion of the primary qualities, and inform us what they are in themselves ; but of the secondary qualities, our senses give us only a relative and obscure notion. They inform us only, that they are qualities that affect us in a certain manner, that is, produce in us a certain sensation ; but as to what they are in themselves, our senses leave us in the dark.

“ The notion we have of primary qualities is direct, and not relative only. A relative notion of the thing, is, strictly speaking, no notion of the thing at all, but only of some relation which it bears to something else.

“ Thus gravity sometimes signifies the tendency of bodies towards the earth ; sometimes it signifies the cause of that tendency. When it



means the first, I have a direct and distinct notion of gravity ; I see it, and feel it, and know perfectly what it is ; but this tendency must have a cause. We give the same name to the cause ; and that cause has been an object of thought and of speculation. Now what notion have we of this cause, when we think and reason about it ? It is evident, we think of it as an unknown cause, of a known effect. This is a relative notion, and it must be obscure ; because it gives us no conception of what the thing is, but of what relation it bears to something else. Every relation which a thing unknown bears to something that is known, may give a relative notion of it ; and there are many objects of thought, and of discourse, of which our faculties can give no better than a relative notion.

“ Having premised these things to explain what is meant by a relative notion, it is evident, that our notion of primary qualities is not of this kind ; we know what they are, and not barely what relation they bear to something else.

“ It is otherwise with secondary qualities. If you ask me, what is that quality or modification in a rose which I call its smell, I am at a loss to answer directly. Upon reflection I find, that I have a distinct notion of the sensation which it produces in my mind. But there can be nothing like to this sensation in the rose because it is insentient. The quality in the rose is something which occasions the sensations in me ; but what that something is, I know not. My senses give me no information upon this point. The only notion, therefore, my senses give is this, That smell in the rose is an unknown quality or modification, which is the cause or occasion of a sensation which I know well. The relation which this unknown quality bears to the sensation with which nature hath connected it, is all I learn from the sense of smelling ; but this is evidently a relative notion. The same reasoning will apply to every secondary quality.

“ Thus I think it appears, that there is a real foundation for the distinction of primary from secondary qualities ; and that they are distinguished by this, that of the primary we have by our senses a direct and distinct notion ; but of the secondary only a relative notion, which must, because it is only relative, be obscure ; they are conceived only as the unknown causes or occasions of certain sensations with which we are well acquainted.” \*

Though we should not,—at least in far the greater number of our sensations,—have considered them, originally, as proceeding from ex-

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\* On the Intellectual Powers, Essay II. c. 17.

ternal causes, we yet, after the acquisitions of knowledge, with which the first years of our life enrich us, believe that there is an external cause of all our sensations,—of smells and tastes, as much as of those feelings of the mind, which constitute our notions of extension and resistance. But the difference, in these cases, is, that though we learn, by experience of certain successions or co-existences of feelings, to refer to a *corporeal* cause our sensations of fragrance, and various other species of sensations, there is nothing in the sensation of fragrance itself, or in the other analogous sensations, of which I speak, that might not indicate as much a cause, directly spiritual, as a cause like that to which we at present give the name of *body*,—while the very notion of extension and resistance combined, seems necessarily to indicate a material cause, or rather is truly that which constitutes our very notion of matter.

We believe, indeed, that our sensations of fragrance, sweetness, sound, have causes of some sort, as truly as we believe, that our feelings of extension and resistance have ; but if we have previously given the name of matter, with direct reference to the one set of effects, and not with direct reference to the other, it necessarily follows, that, in relation to matter, as often as we speak or think of it, the qualities which correspond with the one set of effects, that have led us to use that name, must be regarded by us as primary, and the others, which may, or may not co-exist with these, only as secondary. An external body may, or may not be fragrant, because fragrance is not one of the qualities previously included by us in our definition of a body ; but it *must* be *extended*, and present an obstacle to our compressing force, because these are the very qualities which we have included in our definition, and without which, therefore, the definition must cease to be applicable to the thing defined.

If, originally, we had invented the word *matter* to denote the cause, whatever it might be, of our sensations of smell, it is very evident, that *fragrance* would then have been to us the primary quality of *matter*, as being that which was essential to our definition of matter,—and all other qualities, by which the cause of smell might, or might not, at the same time affect our other senses, would then have been *secondary* qualities only,—as being qualities compatible with our definition of matter, but not essential to it.

What we now term matter, however,—is that which we consider as *occupying space*, and *resisting our effort to compress it* ; and those qualities of matter may well be said to be primary, by which matter itself,

as thus defined, becomes known to us. Extension and resistance are the distinguishing qualities that direct us in all our applications of the word which comprehends them. They are truly *primary* qualities, therefore ; and all the other qualities, which we may afterwards find occasion to refer to an extended resisting substance, must evidently be secondary, in reference to those qualities, without which, as previously combined in our thought, we could not have had the primary notion of the substance to which we thus secondarily refer them. If, in the case which we have already imagined, of the single sense of smell, we had been absolutely unsusceptible of every other external feeling, we might, indeed, have considered our sensation as the effect of *some* cause,—and even of a cause that was different from our mind itself ; but it is very evident that we could not have considered it as the effect of the presence of *matter*, at least as that term is now understood by us. If, in these circumstances, after frequent repetition of the fragrance, as the only quality of bodies with which we could be acquainted,—we were to acquire in an instant all the other senses which we now possess,—so as to become capable of forming that complex notion of things extended and resisting, which is our present notion of matter, we should then, indeed, have a fuller notion of the rose, of the mere fragrance of which we before were sensible, and might learn to refer the fragrance to the rose, by the same co-existences of sensations which have led us, in our present circumstances, to combine the fragrance with other qualities, in the complex conception of the *flower*. Even then, however, though the fragrance, which was our first sensation, had truly been known to us before the other qualities, and therefore, would deserve the name of primary, the *reference* of this earlier feeling to the external rose as its cause, would still truly be *secondary* to the earlier reference, or rather to the earlier combination of other qualities, in one complex whole, by which we had formed to ourselves the notion of the extended and resisting rose, as a body, that admitted the subsequent reference of the delightful sensation of fragrance to be made to it, as the equal cause of these different effects.

In this sense, then, the distinction of the primary and secondary qualities of matter is just,—that, whatever qualities we refer to a *material* cause must be, in reference, secondary to those qualities that are essential to our very notion of the body, to which the subsequent reference of the other qualities is made. We have formed our definition of matter ; and, as in every other definition of every sort, the qualities included in the definition, must always, in comparison of other qualities, be primary and essential, relatively to the thing defined.

Nor is this all.—It will be admitted likewise, that the qualities termed *primary*,—which alone are included in our general definitions of matter, and which are all, as we have seen, modifications of mere extension and resistance, are, even after we have learned to consider the causes of all our sensations as substances external to the mind, still felt by us to be ~~external~~ with more clearness and vividness, than the other qualities, which we term *secondary*. The difference is partly, and chiefly, in the nature of the sensations themselves, as already explained; but depends also, I conceive, in no inconsiderable degree, on the permanence and universality of the objects which possess the primary qualities, and the readiness with which we can renew our feeling of them at will, from the constant presence of our own bodily frame, itself extended and resisting, and of the other causes of these feelings of extension and resistance, that seem to be every where surrounding us. Tastes, smells, sounds,—even colours though more lasting than these—are not always before us;—but there is not a moment at which we cannot, by the mere stretching of our hand, produce, at pleasure, the feeling of something extended and resisting. It is a very natural effect of this difference, that the one set of causes which are always before us, should seem to us, therefore, peculiarly permanent, and the other set, that are only occasionally present, should seem almost as fugitive as our sensations themselves.

To the extent which I have now stated, then, the difference of these classes of qualities may be admitted. But as to the other differences asserted, they seem to be founded on a false view of the nature of perception. I cannot discover any thing in the sensations themselves, corresponding with the primary and secondary qualities; which is *direct*, as Dr. Reid says, in the one case, and only *relative* in the other. All are *relative*, in his sense of the term, and equally relative,—our perception of extension and resistance, as much as our perception of fragrance or bitterness. Our feeling of extension is not itself matter, but a feeling excited by matter. We ascribe, indeed, our sensations as effects to external objects that excite them; but it is only by the medium of our sensations, that these, in any case, become known to us as objects. To say that our perception of extension is not relative to a certain external cause, as our perception of fragrance is relative to a certain external cause, would be to say that our perception of extension, is not a *mental* phenomenon, as much as the perception of fragrance, but is something more than a state of the mind; for, if the perception of extension be, as all our perceptions and all other feelings

must surely be, a *mental* phenomenon, a state of *mind*, not of *matter*, the reference made of this to an external cause, must be only to something which is conceived relatively as the cause of this feeling. What matter is independently of our perception, we know not; and cannot know, for it is only by our sensations that we can have any connexion with it; and even though we were supposed to have our connexion with it enlarged, by various senses additional to those which we possess at present, and our acquaintance with it, therefore, to be far more minute, this very knowledge, however widely augmented, must itself be a *mental phenomenon*, in like manner, the reference of which to matter, as an external cause, would still be *relative* only, like our present knowledge. That the connexion of the feeling of extension, with a corporeal substance really existing without, depends on the arbitrary arrangement made by the Deity; and that all of which we are conscious might therefore have existed, as at present, though no external cause had been, Dr. Reid, who ascribes to an intuitive principle, our belief of an external universe, virtually allows; and this very admission surely implies, that the notion does not, directly and necessarily, involve the existence of any particular cause, whatever it may be itself, by which the Deity has thought proper to produce the corresponding feeling of our mind. In the series of states in which the mind has existed, from the first moment of our life, to the present hour, the feelings of extension, resistance, joy, sorrow, fragrance, colour, hope, fear, heat, cold, admiration, resentment, have often had place; and some of these feelings, it has been impossible for us not to ascribe to a direct external cause; but there have not been in the mental series, which is all of which we can be conscious, both that feeling of the mind which we term the perception of extension, and also body itself, as the cause of this feeling; for body, as an actual substance, cannot be a part of the consciousness of the mind, which is a different substance. It is needless to prolong this discussion, by endeavouring to place the argument in new points of view. The simple answer to the question, "Is our notion of extension, or of the other primary qualities of matter, a phenomenon or affection of matter or of mind?" would be of itself sufficient; for if it be a state of the *mind*, as much as our feeling of heat or of fragrance, and a state produced by the presence of an external cause, as our sensations of heat or fragrance are produced, then there is no reason to suppose, that the knowledge is, in one case, more direct than in the other.

## CHAPTER VI.

## OF VISION.—ANALYSIS OF THE FEELINGS ASCRIBED TO VISION.

## SECTION I.

OUR inquiry into the nature of the sensations of *touch*,—or at least of those sensations which are commonly ascribed to this organ, has led us into speculations, in the course of which I have been obliged to anticipate many remarks, that more peculiarly belong to the sense which still remains to be considered by us,—the sense of *sight*, that to which we owe so much of our most valuable information with respect to nature, and so many of those pleasures, which the bounty of Him, who has formed us to be happy, as well as to be wise, has so graciously intermingled with all the primary means of our instruction.

The anticipations, into which I have been led, were necessary for throwing light on the subjects before considered, particularly on the complex feelings ascribed to touch,—the knowledge of which feelings, however, was still more necessary for understanding fully the complex perceptions of this sense. It is thus scarcely possible, in science, to treat of one subject, without considering it in relation to some other subject, and often to subjects between which, on first view, it would be difficult to trace any relation. Every thing throws light upon every thing,—though the reflection,—which is, in many cases, so bright, as to force itself upon common eyes,—may, in other cases, be so faint, as to be perceptible only to eyes of the nicest discernment. It may almost be said, that there is an universal *affinity* in *truths*,—like that universal attraction, which unites to each other, as one common system, the whole masses which are scattered through the infinity of space, and by which the annihilation of a single particle of matter, in any one of these orbs,—however inconceivably slight its elementary modification might be of the general sum of attraction,—would in that very instant be productive of change throughout the universe. It is not easy to say, what any one science would have been, if any other science had not existed. How different did Astronomy become, in consequence of the accidental burning of a few sea-weeds upon the sand, to which the origin of glass has been ascribed; and, when we think of the universal accessions, which navigation has made to every department of knowledge, what an infinity of truths may be considered as almost starting into existence, at the moment, when the polarity of the magnet was first observed!

The anticipations, which have been made, in the present instance, will be of advantage, in abridging much of the labour, which would have been necessary in treating of vision simply.

The organ of sight is the eye,—a machine of such exquisite and obvious adaptation to the effects produced by it, as to be, of itself, in demonstrating the existence of the Divine Being who contrived it, equal in force to many volumes of theology. The atheist, who has seen and studied its internal structure and yet continues an atheist, may be fairly considered as beyond the power of mere argument to reclaim. The minute details of its structure, however, belong to the anatomist. It is enough for our purpose to know, that, by an apparatus of great simplicity, all the light, which, from every quarter strikes on the pellucid part of the ball of the eye,—and which, if it continued to pass in the same direction, would thus produce one mingled and indistinct expanse of colour, is so *refracted*, as it is termed, or bent from its former direction to certain focal points, as to be distributed again on the retina, in distinct portions, agreeing with the portions which come from each separate object, so exactly, as to form as it is a miniature landscape of the scenery without. Nor is this all. That we may vary, at our pleasure, the field of this landscape, the ball of the eye is furnished with certain muscles, which enable us to direct it more particularly toward the objects which we wish to view; and according as the light which falls from these may be more or less intense, there are parts which minister to the sensibility of the eye, by increasing or diminishing in proportion the transparent aperture at which the light is admitted. There are, then, in this truly wonderful and beautiful process, in the first place, as determining what objects, in the wide scene around us, are to be visible at the moment, *the contraction of certain muscles*, on which the particular field of our vision depends, and which may almost be said to enable us to increase the extent of our field of vision, by enabling us to vary it at will;—in the second place, *the external light*, emitted from all the objects within this radiant field, which, on its arrival at the retina, is itself the direct object of vision;—in the third place, the provision for increasing or diminishing the diameter of the pupil, in proportion to the quantity of that incident light;—in the fourth place, the *apparatus*, by which the dispersed rays of light are made to assume within the eye, the focal convergence necessary for distinct vision;—and lastly, the expansion of the optic nerve, as a part of the great sensorial organ, essential to sensation. The difference of the phenomena, produced by the varieties of the external light and

is exhibited in almost every moment of our waking existence ; and the diversities, arising from other parts of the process, are not less striking. There are peculiar diseases which affect the optic nerve, or other parts of the sensorial organ immediately connected with it,—there are other diseases which affect the refracting apparatus,—others which affect the iris, so as to prevent the enlargement or diminution of the pupil, when different quantities of light are poured on it,—others, which affect the muscles that vary the position of the ball,—and in all these cases, we find, as might be expected, a corresponding difference of the phenomena.

To open our eyes at present, is not to have a single, simple feeling ; it is, as it were, to have innumerable feelings. The colour, the magnitude, the figure, the relative position of bodies, are seen by us at once. It is not a small expanse of light, which we perceive, equal merely to the surface of the narrow expansion of the optic nerve. It is the universe itself. We are present with stars, which beam upon us, at a distance that converts to nothing the whole wide diameter of our planetary system. It is as if the tie, which binds us down to the globe on which we dwell, belonged only to our other senses, and had no influence over this, which, even in its union with the body, seems still to retain all the power and unbounded freedom of its celestial origin.

It is of importance, however, to remember, that, even in the perception of the most distant body, the true object of vision is not the distant body itself, but the light that has reached the expansive termination of the optic nerve ; and the sense of vision, therefore, which seems so independent of the tie that binds us to our small spot of earth is as truly limited to it, as any of our other senses. If the light could exist in the same manner, moving in the same varieties of direction, as at present,—though no other bodies were in existence, than the light itself, and our sensorial organ,—all the sensations belonging to mere sight would be exactly the same as now ; and accordingly we find, as light is, in a great measure, manageable by us, that we have it in our power to vary at pleasure the visual notions, which any one would otherwise have formed of bodies,—without altering the bodies themselves, or even their position with respect to the eye,—by merely interposing substances, to modify the light reflected or emitted from them. The same paper which we term white, when we observe it with our naked eye, appears blue or red, when we look at it through glass of such a kind, as absorbs all the light which enters it, but the rays of those particular



colours; and it seems larger or smaller, as we look at it through a concave or convex lens, which leaves the object precisely as it was, and affects only the direction of the rays that come from it;—the reason of all which diversities of perception is, that, though what we are accustomed to term the *object* continues the same,—whatever substance may be interposed between it and the eye,—that, which is really the object of vision, is *different*; and our perceptions, therefore, correspond with the diversity of their real objects.

In treating of the distinction which has been made, of those objects of sense which act *directly* on our organs, and of those which act through a *medium*, as it has been termed, I before remarked the confusion, into which we might be led, by this distinction, which forgets that the supposed *medium* is itself the real *object*, as truly, as any of the objects, which, in their relations to other senses, are termed *direct*. In no instance, however, has it led to so much confusion, as in the case of vision. It is the more important, therefore, for us to have precise notions on this subject, and to have constantly in mind, that, though, indirectly, we may be said to perceive by sight distant objects, as truly as we perceive colour, still the *direct* object of vision is not the object, existing permanently at a distance, but those rays of light, whose existence is independent of the object, and which have received, from the object that reflects them, nothing more than a change of their direction, in consequence of which they have come within the boundary of that small pellucid circle of the eye, which, insignificant as it may seem, comprehends in itself what is truly the whole sphere of our vision.

The immediate object of vision, then, is *light*, which gives rise to all the various sensations of colour; and, since the days of Berkeley, philosophers have, with scarcely any exception, admitted, that the knowledge of the distance, magnitude, and real figure of objects, which seems at present to be immediately received by sight, is the result of knowledge acquired by the other senses:—though they have,—I think without sufficient reason,—as universally supposed, that the superficial extension, of length and breadth, becomes known to us by sight originally;—that there is, in short, a *visible figure* of objects, corresponding with the picture which they form on the retina, and changing, therefore, with their change of position relatively to the eye,—and a *tangible figure* of objects, permanent and independent of their change of place; the latter being the real figure suggested by the former, nearly in the same manner as the conception of objects is suggested by the arbitrary sounds, or written characters, which denote them. The in-

quiry, with respect to the truth of this visible figure, as a sensation, may, however, be omitted, till we have considered the former opinion, which respects the visual perception of distance, and of the figure and magnitude which are termed *tangible*.

If it had been duly considered, that it is *light* which is the true object of vision, and not the luminous body, the question, as far as it depends on reasoning *a priori*, exclusively of any instinctive connexions that might be supposed, could not have admitted of very long discussion. From whatever distance light may come, it is but the *point* of the long line, which terminates at the retina, of which we are sensible; and this terminating point must be the same whether the ray has come from a few feet of distance, or from many miles. The rays that beam from the adjacent meadow, or the grove, are not nearer to my eye, at the instant of vision, than those which have been reflected from the mountain on the very verge of the horizon, or from the cloud that hangs at an immeasurable distance above my head. The light, that converges on our eye, from all the stars of heaven, within what we term the field of our vision, is collected in a space, that cannot be larger than the retina on which it falls. A *cube* or a *sphere* is represented to us, by the two dimensions of a coloured *plane*, variously shaded, as truly as by the object itself with its triple dimensions; and, in the determination of the exact correspondence of these double and triple dimensions, in all their varieties of relation to the eye, the whole art of perspective consists. A coin of a single inch in diameter, when placed before the eye, and, of course, intercepting only an extent of light equal to the extent of its own surface, is sufficient to hide from us, by actual eclipse, the fields, and villages, and woods that seemed stretched in almost endless continuity before us.

Unless, therefore, there be some instinctive and immediate suggestion, of certain distances, magnitudes, and figures, by certain varieties of the sensation of colour, there is nothing in the mere light itself, or in its relation to the eye at the moment of vision, which seems fit to communicate the knowledge of these. Not of *distance*; for the rays from distant objects, when they produce vision, are as near to the retina as the rays from objects that are contiguous to the eye. Not of *real magnitude*; for an object, with which we are familiar, appears to us of the same size, at distances, at which every thing merely visual is so completely changed, that its magnitude, as far as it depends on mere radiation, may be demonstrated, from the laws of optics, to be equal only to a half or a tenth part of its apparent magnitude when nearer.

Not of *figure* ; for, without the knowledge of longitudinal distance, we could not distinguish a sphere or a cube from a plane surface of two dimensions ; and an object, with the shape of which we are familiar, appears to us of the same form, in all directions ; though it may be demonstrated optically, that the visual figure, as far as it depends on mere radiation, must vary with every variety of position.

I have said, that the knowledge of the real magnitude, figure, and position of bodies, could not be obtained immediately from the ~~dispositions~~ <sup>dispositions</sup> of the mere surfaces of light at the retina ; unless it were the suggestion of some instinctive principle, by which the one feeling was, originally and inseparably, connected with the other. Some diversity there evidently must be of the immediate sensation of sight, or of other feelings co-existing with it, when a difference of magnitude or figure is suggested : the visual affection, which is followed by the notion of a mile, cannot be the same as that which is attended with the notion of half a foot ; nor that which is attended with the perception of a sphere, be the same as that which suggests a plane circular surface. Whatever the number of the varied suggestions of this kind may be, there must be, at least, an equal variety of the immediate sensations that give rise to them ; and these corresponding series of sensations and suggestions, may originally be associated together by an instinctive principle, as much as any other pairs of phenomena, the connexion of which we ascribe to instinct ; or, in other words, suppose an adaptation of them to each other, by the gracious provision of the Power which formed us, for a purpose unforeseen by us, and unwilld at the moment. It is not more wonderful, *a priori*, that a sensation of colour should be immediately followed by the notion of a mile of distance, than that the irritation of the nostril, by any very stimulating odour, should be immediately and involuntarily followed by the sudden contraction of a distant muscular organ, like the diaphragm, which produces, in sneezing, the violent expiration necessary for expelling the acrid matter ;—or that an increase of the quantity of light poured on the eye, should be instantly, and without our consciousness, followed by a contraction of the transparent aperture. I am far from saying, that there truly is such an instinctive association of our original visual feelings, with corresponding notions of distance and magnitude, in the present case ; for, at least in *man*, I believe the contrary. I mean only, that the question has, *a priori*, only greater probability on one side, not absolute certainty ; and that experience is necessary, before we can decide it with perfect confidence.

In the case of the other animals, there seems to be little reason to doubt, that the tedious process, by which man may be truly said to learn to see, is not necessary for their visual perceptions. The calf, and the lamb, newly dropt into the world, seem to measure forms and distances with their eyes, as distinctly, or at least almost as distinctly, as the human reasoner measures them, after all the acquisitions of his long and helpless infancy. Of these races of our fellow animals, Nature is at once the *Teacher* and the great *Protectress*,—supplying to them immediately the powers which are necessary for their preservation,—as, in the long continued affection of the human parent, she far more than compensates to man the early instincts which she has denied to him. If the other animals had to learn to see, in the same manner with ourselves, it would be scarcely possible that their existence should be preserved to the period, at which the acquisitions, necessary for accurate perception, could be made; even though the hoof had been an instrument of touch and measurement, as convenient as the hand. For this difference in the relative circumstances of their situation, the Almighty Being,—to whose universal benevolence, nothing which he has created is too humble for his care,—has made sufficient provision, in giving them that early maturity, which makes them, for many months, the *superiors* of him, who is afterwards to rule them with a sway, that is scarcely conscious of effort.

This instinctive suggestion, which, however subsequent it may be to the primary visual sensation, seems like immediate perception in the young of other races of animals, is a very strong additional proof, if any such were necessary, that there is no physical impossibility, in the supposition that a similar original suggestion may take place in man. The question, as I before said, becomes truly a question of observation and experiment.

But in man, there is not that necessity for the instinct, which exists in the peculiar situation of the other animals; and we find accordingly, that there is no trace of the instinct in him. It is long before the little nursing shows, that his eye has distinguished objects from each other, so as to fix their place. We are able almost to trace in his efforts the progress which he is gradually making;—and, in those striking cases, which are sometimes presented to us, of the acquisition of sight, in mature life, in consequence of a surgical operation,—after vision had been obstructed from infancy,—it has been found, that the actual magnitude and figure, and position of bodies, were to be learned like a new language,—that all objects seemed equally close to the eye,—and that

a sphere and a cube, of each of which the tangible figure was previously known, were not so distinguishable in the mere sensation of vision, that the one could be said, with certainty to be the cube, and the other the sphere. In short, what had been *supposed*, with every appearance of probability, was *demonstrated* by experiment,—that we learn to see,—and that vision is truly, what Swift has paradoxically defined it to be, *the art of seeing things that are invisible*.

SECTION II.—*Analysis of the Feelings ascribed to Vision, continued.*

Of all the arts, which man can acquire, this is, without question, the richest, both in wonder and in value,—so rich in value, that if the race of man had been incapable of acquiring it, the very possibility of their continued existence seems scarcely conceivable ; and so rich in subjects of wonder, that to be most familiar with these, and to study them with most attention, is to find at every moment new miracles of nature, worthy of still increasing admiration.

On this subject the remarks of Dr. Reid are not less just than they are strikingly expressed. “If we shall suppose an order of beings, endowed with every human faculty but that of sight, how incredible would it appear to such beings, accustomed only to the slow informations of touch, that, by the addition of an organ, consisting of a ball and socket of an inch diameter, they might be enabled in an instant of time, without changing their place, to perceive the disposition of a whole army, or the order of a battle, the figure of a magnificent palace, or all the variety of a landscape ? If a man were by feeling to find out the figure of the Peak of Teneriffe, or of even St. Peter’s Church at Rome, it would be the work of a lifetime.

“It would appear still more incredible to such beings as we have supposed, if they are informed of the discoveries which may be made by this little organ in things far beyond the reach of any other sense : That by means of it we can find our way in the pathless ocean ; that we can traverse the globe of the earth, determine its figure and dimensions, and delineate every region of it : Yea, that we can measure the planetary orbs, and make discoveries in the sphere of the fixed stars.

“Would it not appear still more astonishing to such beings, if they be further informed, That, by means of this same organ, we can perceive the tempers and dispositions, the passions and affections of

our fellow-creatures, even when they want most to conceal them? That when the tongue is taught most artfully to lie and dissemble, the hypocrisy should appear in the countenance to a discerning eye; and that by this organ, we can often perceive what is straight and what is crooked in the mind, as well as in the body?—How many mysterious things must a blind man believe, if he will give credit to the relations of those that see! Surely he needs as strong a faith as is required of a good Christian.” \*

The same observation has been put in a strong light, by the supposition, that it had been as uncommon to be born with the power of sight, as it is now to be born incapable of it;—in which case it has been truly said, that “the few who had this rare gift would appear as prophets or inspired teachers to the many.” † The very easy predictions thus made, would be found, constantly, or almost constantly, fulfilled, by those who could form no conception of the means by which the effects predicted were foreseen; and wonderful as the dreams and visions of prophetic inspiration may appear, they surely could not seem more wonderful as a medium of communication than that by which the very secrets of the mind, and events apparently the most distant, were made known, through the intervention of a small ball like the eye.

In showing the manner by which we learn to combine, with our visual sensations, the knowledge obtained by touch; or, as I am rather inclined to think, for reasons formerly stated, the knowledge falsely ascribed to mere touch; it will not be necessary to go over the different varieties of figure, magnitude, distance. The most striking of these is *distance*,—which, indeed, may be truly said to involve the other two; since the distance of an object is merely the extension of the long line that intervenes between the object and our eye, and the consequent magnitude of the intervening objects, and that which we consider, regarded as one extended whole. Of this one great whole, what we term the distant object is nothing more than the boundary. The cottage at the end of the field is a part of that compound magnitude, of which the field and the cottage are separately parts, exactly in the same manner as the wing of a house is a part of the compound magnitude of the whole building. The line of field which connects our eye with the cottage, may, indeed, be a longer line, but it is a line of precisely the same sort as that which connects the wings of the house with our organ of sight, or with each other.

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\* Reid's Inquiry into the Human Mind, &c. c. 6. sect. 1.

† Ibid. c. 6. sect. 2.

It is vain to think of ascribing the perception of distance to the measurement of the different angles subtended by objects, at different distances, or to an equally nice measurement of the different degrees of inclination of the eyes, necessary for distinct vision, in particular cases,—as if all men were instinctively geometers, and the peasant and the very idiot were incessantly occupied in measuring angles; for if this measurement were truly *instinctive*, it would occur in infancy, as in maturity, and be *immediate* in those who have acquired the power of vision by the surgical operation formerly alluded to. But the most decisive of all considerations, with respect to this supposed geometry, is, that the angles subtended by the object at its different distances, and the inclination of the optic axis, in the spontaneous accommodation of the eyes to the distinct vision of the object at different distances, though truly existing, to the mere optical examiner of the object, and the light, and the eye, as one compound phenomenon, have no real existence, as feelings of the mind, of the individual who sees, and are known but to very few of the immense multitudes, who without the slightest acquaintance with geometry, or the slightest knowledge of the very lines, whose angles they are supposed to measure, are yet able to distinguish the distances of objects as accurately, as the most expert mathematician. How is it possible that the angles, which remote objects make relatively to the eye, should be known originally, when the remote objects themselves are not known, but merely the points of light on the retina? In relation to the eye, as the organ, and to the mind, as originally sentient in vision, these points of light were truly all that existed. The light, indeed, traversed a certain space, in passing from the object to the eye, and the lines of direction of the different rays, in arriving at one focal point at the retina, formed truly different angles. But the angles could not be known, unless the radiant lines themselves were known; and of these, the mind could have no knowledge. During the whole time of their convergence, till they reached the expansion of the optic nerve, the rays of light were as little capable of producing vision, as darkness itself; and, when they reached the retina, the lines, and consequently the angles, existed no more. Of whatever use, therefore, such angles may be to the optician, in laying down, and illustrating the principles of his science, they are of no use in the actual living measurements of sight. Man may reason, indeed,—but he must reason from what he *knows*; and, therefore, if the determination of distance be the result of any *judgment*, it must be of a judgment formed from feelings which truly have, or have had, existence.

Such feelings, the elements of our visual judgments, it is not very difficult to discover.

The great principle, in this case, is the principle of association, by which the notions derived from touch, or, at least, the notions which are commonly supposed to be derived from that sense, are suggested immediately by the visual feelings which co-existed with the sensations of touch ; in the same manner, as the words of a language, when a language has been fully learned, suggest whatever the words may have been used to denote. A child, whose eye has already learned to distinguish objects, hears the word *cup* frequently repeated, when a cup is held before him ; and the *word* afterwards suggests the *thing*. This process every one understands. But we are not equally aware, that, in the prior stage of learning to distinguish the cup by the eye, the child went through a process exactly similar,—that the visual feeling, which the rays of light from the cup excited, co-existed with the tactual and muscular feeling, when he handled the cup ; and that the one feeling was thus associated for ever after with the other.

The means, by which we acquire our knowledge of the distance of objects, may be reduced to three,—the difference of the affections of the *optic nerve*,—the different affections of the *muscles*, employed in varying the refracting power of each eye, according to the distance of objects, and in producing that particular inclination of the axes of the two eyes, which directs them both equally on the particular object,—and thirdly, the previous knowledge of the distance of other objects, which form, with that which we are considering, a part of one compound perception.

To begin, then, with the affections of the retina. These become signs of distance, in two ways, by the extent of the part of the retina affected, and by the more or less vivid affection of the part.

It is evident, from the laws of optics, that, according to the distance of the object from the eye, there must, when all other circumstances are the same, be a difference of the extent of the retina, on which the light falls. This illuminated portion of the nervous expanse, as supposed to be instantly perceived, is what is termed the visible figure of an object ; and, though I am disposed to question the knowledge, which the mind is believed to acquire of this figure, from the mere sensation of colour, to which the affection of the retina gives rise,—I am far from denying, that the sensation itself, whatever it may originally be, will be different according to the extent of the retina affected, as the sensation of *heat* is different, according to the extent of the sur-



face, which has grown warmer or colder,—or of *fragrance*, according as a small number of odorous particles have acted on a portion of the surface of the organ of smell, or a greater number of these on a greater portion of that surface. The different feelings, then, when more or less of the retina has been affected, are capable of being associated with other feelings which may co-exist with them. An object, held at the distance of a foot from the eye, affects one part of the retina,—held at arm's length, it affects less of the retina; and this difference, not indeed as perceived in figure, but as perceived in the variety, whatever that may originally be, of the resulting sensations, being found constant and uniform, becomes of itself significant of the distance.

Another mode, in which the affection of the retina becomes significant of distance, is by the brightness or dimness of the visible figure, and its distinctness or indistinctness of outline; or, as I would rather say, by the peculiar sensations, without regard to figure, which accompany those varieties of light. Since, at a distance, less light falls from objects on the eye, and their outline becomes less definite, a new measure is thus obtained, in addition to that which is derived from the mere difference in extent of the retina affected. In the illusion of this spontaneous measurement, consists the chief magic of the painter's art. By different shades of colour, he produces corresponding perceptions of distance; and thus, making one part of a plane surface seem more remote than another, converts it, as far as the mere eye can judge, into a cube or sphere, or any other solid, which he chooses to present to us. By the indistinct outline which he gives to his small figures, in the back ground of a landscape, he leads us to consider them, not as diminutive in themselves, which we should conceive them to be, if, with equal smallness, their outline were clearer, but merely as less or more remote. He is thus able to vary his figures in three ways,—to make them larger or smaller, more or less bright, and more or less precisely defined; and, by uniting these varieties, in various proportions, to distinguish not merely what is large from what is small, but the diminutive from the distant, and the gigantic from the near.

Accordingly we find, that, in circumstances in which the medium of transmission of light from objects is much altered, our perception of distance and magnitude becomes less accurate. In a fog, objects appear to us greatly magnified; because the effect produced on the retina, in the extent of the visible figure and its dimness and indefinite outline, is truly the same, as when a larger object, in the common state of the atmosphere, is seen by us at a distance, From the same prin-

ciple, objects seen under a brighter sky, and in purer air, seem nearer than they really are, to those whose notions of distance have been acquired in a less happy climate. This has been remarked, by travellers in Italy, and particularly by one of the most illustrious of those who have visited that beautiful country,—a traveller whose attention had been particularly turned to observations of this sort. The very acute observer, of whom I speak, is Berkeley, in whose *Theory of Vision* there is to be found a very interesting section, in which he at once describes this impression, and accounts for it.

Our affections of the retina, then, both in the extent of the nervous expansion affected, and in the species of affection, afford one set of feelings, with which the notion of distance may be associated, in the same manner as the sounds or visual characters of a language may be associated with the conceptions which they denote, or any other feelings with any other feelings.

The next set of feelings which we have to consider, in relation to our perception of distance, belong to a class, of the importance of which I have had frequent occasion to speak, *the muscular feelings*, in the contraction of those muscles, which adapt the nice refracting apparatus in each eye, to the degree of refraction, necessary for distinct vision in the particular case, and produce that inclination of the axes of vision to each other, which is necessary for directing both eyes equally on the object. The muscular feeling may be slight indeed, but still it is sufficient to modify, in some degree, the whole compound sensation of the moment. One degree of contraction is attended with a particular feeling; another degree with a different feeling; and, as there are various muscles, subservient to the motions of the eyes, some of which are exerted, while others are quiescent,—the feeling, it is evident, must vary, not with the degree of contraction merely, but also with the muscles contracted. A certain muscular feeling, however simple or complex, accompanies the mere visual sensation, and blends with it; and it is with this compound feeling, *muscular and visual*, that the notion of distance is associated.

The muscular adaptation, however, it may be remarked, seems, in a great measure, to imply the very knowledge which it is supposed to give; since we cannot, instantly and voluntarily, adapt our eyes to the state necessary for distinct vision, at a particular distance, unless we have previously known that particular distance. The necessary adaptation, however, if it be not the result of a rapid change of various degrees of contraction in each particular case, may depend, not-

on our knowledge and will, but on an instinctive connexion of certain motions with certain feelings, in which there is as little consciousness of design, as in that very analogous instinct, or connexion of motions with feelings, which increases or diminishes the diameter of the pupil, according to the quantity of light which is poured upon the eye, when the individual, far from willing the contraction, does not know even that such a contraction has taken place.

A third element, in the calculation of the distance of an object, is the previous knowledge of the distance of other objects, which form together with it one compound perception. Thus, when we look along a road, and observe a man on horseback, who has nearly approached a house which we know, we have of course little difficulty in determining the distance of the rider. Every one must have felt how much easier his judgments of the distance of moving objects are, in scenes with which he is in some degree acquainted, than in a country which is new to him; and what aid the interposition of a variety of objects gives, even though we may not be well acquainted with the exact extent and distance of each. To an inexperienced eye, therefore, in a first voyage, a ship at a distance seems far nearer than it truly is, from the absence of varied intervening objects in the line between. Even in the case of a river, which is not so broad as to prevent us from distinguishing objects on the opposite side, it is with great difficulty that we attempt to guess the distance, with any approach to exactness. There is a constant tendency to suppose the breadth of the river less than it is, and consequently the objects on the opposite bank nearer than they are. For the same reason, the horizontal line, in which innumerable objects intervene between the eye and the horizon, appears so much longer than the line of altitude of the meridian, that the vault of the sky does not seem a hemisphere, but a far smaller segment of a great sphere.

These few very slight remarks, however, will be sufficient to show, in what manner the notion of distance may be associated with mere *visual feelings*, that in themselves originally involve no notion of distance, as the words of a language, which in themselves, either as sounds or characters, involve no relation to one object more than to another, become instantly significant of particular objects, and excite emotions of love or joy, or hate or indignation, like the very presence of some living friend or foe.

It has been very justly remarked, that, if all men had uniformly spoken the same language, in every part of the world, it would be dif-

difficult for us not to think that there is a natural connexion of our ideas and the words which we use to denote them ; and it is not wonderful, therefore, that a similar illusion should take place with respect to what may be termed the universal language of vision ; since, in the case of visual perception, all men may be truly said to have the same language ; the same sensations of sight, being to all significant of magnitude and distance. And it is well that the judgments which we form, on these important points, are thus prompt and spontaneous ; for, if we had to wait till we had calculated the distance and magnitude of every thing around us, by a measurement of angles, we should be cut off, in our optical career, before we could, with all our geometry, determine, with precision, whether the things which we needed most, or the objects of greatest peril to us, were ten or a thousand paces distant, and whether they were of the bulk of a mole hill or of a mountain.

A miniature image of the objects which we see, is pictured on the retina, in an inverted position ; and though an image is pictured in each eye, we see not *two* objects but *one*. To philosophers, who are even more expert in finding mysteries than in solving them, this single vision of the erect object, from a double image of the object inverted, has usually seemed very mysterious ; and yet there is really nothing in it at all mysterious, to any one, who has learned to consider how much of the visual perception is referable to association. If the light, reflected from a single object touched by us, had produced not two merely, but two thousand separate images in our eyes, erect or inverted, or in any intermediate degree of inclination, the visual feeling, thus excited, however complex, would still have accompanied the touch of a single object ; and if only it had accompanied it uniformly, the single object would have been suggested by it precisely in the same manner as it is now suggested by the particular visual feeling that attends the present double inverted image. To this supposed anomaly in the language of vision, a perfect analogy is to be found in the most obvious cases of common language. The two words *he conquered* excite exactly the same notion as the single Latin word *vicit* ; and if any language were so paraphrastic as to employ *ten* words for the same purpose, there would be no great reason for philosophic wonder at the unity of the notion suggested by so many words. The two images of the single object, in the arbitrary language of visual perception, are, as it were, two words significant of one notion.

Whatever the simple original sensation of vision may be, then, it is capable of being associated with other notions, so as to become signifi-

cant of them. But to what does the simple original sensation itself amount? Is it mere colour,—or is it something more?

The universal opinion of philosophers is, that it is not *colour* merely which it involves, but *extension* also,—that there is a visible figure, as well as a tangible figure—and that the visible figure involves, in our instant original perception, superficial length and breadth, as the tangible figure which we learn to see, involves length, breadth, and thickness.

That it is impossible for us, at present, to separate, in the sensation of vision, the colour from the extension, I admit; though not more completely impossible, than it is for us to look on the thousand feet of a meadow, and to perceive only the small inch of greenness on our retina; and the one impossibility, as much as the other, I conceive to arise only from intimate association, subsequent to the original sensations of sight. Nor do I deny, that a certain part of the retina,—which, being limited, must therefore have figure,—is affected by the rays of light that fall on it, as a certain breath of nervous expanse is affected in all the other organs. I contend only, that the perception of this limited figure of the portion of the retina affected, does not enter into the sensation itself, more than in our sensations of any other species, there is a perception of the nervous breadth affected.

The immediate perception of visible figure has been assumed as indisputable, rather than attempted to be proved,—as, before the time of Berkeley, the immediate visual perception of distance, and of the three dimensions of matter, was supposed, in like manner, to be without any need of proof;—and it is, therefore, impossible to refer to arguments on the subject. I presume, however, that the reasons, which have led to this belief, of the immediate perception of a figure termed visible, as distinguished from that tangible figure, which we learn to see, are the following two,—the only reasons which I can even imagine,—that it is absolutely impossible, in our present sensations of sight, to separate colour from extension,—and that there are, in fact, a certain length and breadth of the retina, on which the light falls.

With respect to the first of these arguments, it must be admitted, by those who contend for the immediate perception of visible figure, that it is now impossible for us to refer to our original feelings, and that we can speak, with absolute certainty, only of our present feelings, or, at least, of those which we remember, as belonging to a period long after our first sensations.

What may, or may not, have been originally separable, we cannot, then, determine. But what, even now, is the *species of extension*, which it is impossible for us, in our visual perceptions, to separate from colour? Is there the slightest consciousness of a perception of visible figure, corresponding with the affected portion of the retina,—or is not the superficial magnitude, and the only magnitude, which we connect with colour, in any case, the very superficial magnitude which we term tangible,—a magnitude, that does not depend on the diameter of the retina, but is variously greater or less, depending only on the magnitude and distance of the external object.

The mere length and breadth, then, which we cannot separate from colour, are not the length and breadth of the figure termed visible,—for of the perception of these limited dimensions, we have no consciousness,—but the length and breadth that are truly tangible;—and there is not a single moment of visual perception, in which the slightest evidence is afforded by our consciousness of that difficulty of separation, with respect to the affected portion of the expanse of the retina, on which the supposed argument, as to the perception of visible figure, is founded.

Even though the superficial dimensions of length and breadth, connected with colour in vision, were those of the figured retina affected, and were necessarily limited to its small expanse, there would still be no greater impossibility of separating the colour from mere length and breadth in vision, than of separating it from the triple dimensions of length, breadth, and thickness; and the argument, therefore, if it had any force, would be equally applicable to these.

I open my eyes, in the light of day, with a wide landscape around me. I have a sensation, or perception, of varieties of colour, and of all the dimensions of matter. I cannot separate the colour from the length and breadth of the trunk of a large oak before me; but equally impossible is it for me, to separate the colour from the convexity and the magnitude; and, from this equal impossibility, I might conclude, with equal force, that the perception of the convexity and magnitude is immediate and original, as the perception of mere length and breadth. Where all things are equal, we cannot justly deny to one what we allow to another. He who affirms, that, in looking at a sphere, he can separate, as elements of his sensation, the colour and the convexity, may be allowed to use this argument of impossibility, as proof of original connexion, in the other case. But it is only a person so privileged by nature,—and where is such a person to be found?—who can fairly use it.

We are able, indeed,—not while we continue to look at the sphere, but with a sort of mental effort afterwards, to separate the colour from the convexity, and to imagine the same colour united with any other surface, plane or concave,—the reason of which is very evident. Our sensation of colour has not been uniformly associated with one species of extension, but with all its varieties; and may, therefore, be suggested in possible co-existence with all. In all these varieties, however, two dimensions have been constantly implied; and, therefore, the association of colour with these is complete and indissoluble. If every surface in nature had been convex, it is by no means improbable, that we should have found the same difficulty, in attempting to separate colour from convexity, which we now find, in attempting to separate it from mere length and breadth.

The impossibility of separating the sensation of colour from the notion of extension, it appears, then, is not a decisive proof of an original connexion of these; for, if it were decisive, it would prove still more;—and we might, from this alone, assert, with equal confidence, the original visual perception of three dimensions, as that of two, and of the magnitude and figure, which we term *tangible*, as much as of those which we have chosen to term *visible*. It is surely as little possible for us, when we open our eyes on some wide and magnificent landscape, to separate the colour, as a mere visual sensation, from the field, the mountain, the forest, the stream, the sky, as to separate it from the half inch, or inch of our retina, of the perception of which we have no consciousness in any case; and it is too much for those who deny the immediate perception of those greater magnitudes, to urge, in proof of the necessary original perception of this inch or half inch, what, if valid in any respect, must establish no less the proposition which they deny, than the proposition which they affirm.

But, it will be said, there is truly a certain figure of the part of the retina, on which the light falls. The fact is undeniable. But the question is, not whether such a figure exist, but whether the 'perception of the figure necessarily form a part of the sensation. The brain, and nervous system in general, are of a certain form, when they are affected in any manner. But it does not, therefore, follow,—as the fact sufficiently shows,—that the knowledge of this form constitutes any part of the changeful feeling of the moment. To confine ourselves, however, to the mere senses,—it is not in the organ of sight only, that the nervous matter is of a certain shape;—it is expanded into some shape or other, in every organ. When the whole, or a part,

therefore, of the olfactory organ is affected by the rays of odour, if I may so term them, we might, with exactly the same ground for our belief, suppose that the knowledge of a certain extension must accompany the fragrance, because a certain nervous expanse is, in this case, affected, as that the notion of a certain extension must, for the same reason, and for the same reason alone, accompany the sensation of colour. It is because the same light, which acts upon the organ of one person, may be made visible to another, that we conceive it more peculiarly to be figured, as it were, on the nervous expanse, when it is not in itself truly more figured, than the number of co-existing particles of odour, which affect the nerve of smell. We cannot exhibit the particles of odour, however, acting on the nostril of any one. But, when the eye is dissected from its orbit, we can show the image of a luminous body, distinctly formed upon the retina. *We*, the observers of the dissected eye, have thus a clearer notion of the length and breadth of the nervous matter affected in the one case than in the other. But it is not in the dissected eye that vision takes place; and as the living eye, and the living nostrils, are alike affected in more than one physical point, we must surely admit, that in both cases, and in both cases equally, a certain length and breadth are affected, and that there is an olfactory figure as truly as a visible figure. The mere visibility of the image to another person cannot alter the nature of the organic affection itself, to the sentient individual. If the olfactory figure be not necessarily accompanied with the perception of extension, there is no stronger reason *a priori*, to suppose that what is termed the visible figure,—which is nothing more than a similar affection of a nervous expanse,—should be accompanied with the knowledge of the part of the retina affected.

These arguments, however, though they seem to me to invalidate completely the only arguments which I can imagine to be urged in support of our original perception of figure by the eye, are negative only. But there is also a *positive* argument, which seems to me truly decisive, against the supposed necessary perception of visible figure,—that it implies the blending of things which cannot be blended. If the mere visual sensation of colour imply, in itself, no figure, I can conceive it to be blended with any figure; but not so, if it imply, in itself a fixed definite figure, so essential to the very sensation of the colour, that without it the colour could not for a single moment be perceived. During the whole time, then, in which I am gazing on a wide landscape, there is, according to the opinion of those who contend for the necessary perception of visible figure, not colour merely, but a certain



small coloured expanse, of definite outline, constantly perceived,—since, without this, colour itself could not be perceived; and, during all this time, there is also a notion of a figure of a very different kind, of three dimensions, and of magnitude almost infinitely greater, combined, not with colour merely, but with the same coloured expanse. There must, therefore, be some possible combination of these forms and magnitudes; since it is the colour which we perceive that is blended with the tangible magnitudes suggested. Now, though there are certain feelings which may co-exist and unite, it appears to me, that there are others which cannot be so blended. I may combine, for example, my notion of a plane or convex surface, with my notion of whiteness or blueness, hardness or softness, roughness or smoothness; but I cannot blend my notions of these two surfaces, the plane and the convex, as one surface, both plane and convex, more than I can think of a whole which is less than a fraction of itself, or a square, of which the sides are not equal, and the angles equal only to three right angles. The same blue or white surface cannot appear to me, then, at once plane and convex, as it must do if there be a visible figure of one exact outline co-existing with the tactual figure which is of a different outline; nor, even though the surface were in both cases *plane*, can it appear to me, at the same moment, half an inch square, and many feet square. All this must be done, however, as often as we open our eyes, if there be truly any perception of visible figure co-existing with the mere suggestions of touch. The visible figure of the sphere, on which I fix my gaze, is said to be a plane of two dimensions inseparable from colour, and this inseparable colour must yet be combined with the sphere, which I perceive distinctly to be convex. According to the common theory, therefore, it is at once, to my perception, *convex* and *plane*; and if the sphere be a large one, it is perceived, at the same moment, to be a sphere of many feet in diameter, and a plane circular surface of the diameter of a quarter of an inch. The assertion of so strange a combination of incongruities would, indeed, require some powerful arguments to justify it; yet it has been asserted, not merely without positive evidence, as if not standing in need of any proof, but in absolute opposition to our consciousness; and the only arguments which we can ever imagine to be urged for it, are, as we have seen, of no weight,—or would tend as much to prove the original visual perception of tangible figures, as of the figure that is termed visible.

Is it not at least more probable, therefore, that though, like the particles of odour, when they act upon our nostrils, the rays of light affect a portion of the retina, so as to produce on it an image, which, if the eye were separated from its orbit, and its coats dissected, might be a distinct visible figure to the eye of another observer; this figure of the portion of the retina affected, enters as little into the simple original sensation of sight, as the figure of the portion of the olfactory nervous expanse, when it is affected, enters into the sensations of smell?—and that, when the simple affection of sight is blended with the ideas of suggestion, in what are termed the acquired perceptions of vision,—as, for example, in the perception of a sphere,—it is colour only which is blended with the large convexity, and not a small coloured plane?—which small coloured plane being necessarily limited in extent and form, so as never to be larger than the retina itself, cannot blend with various forms and magnitudes, and which, if it could even be supposed to constitute a *part* of the convexity of a sphere perceived by us, still could not diffuse its own limited and inseparable colour over the whole magnitude of the sphere.

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## CHAPTER VII.

### HISTORY OF OPINIONS REGARDING PERCEPTION.

**I**n sensation, I consider the feeling of the mind to be the simple effect of the presence of the object; or, at least, of some change, which the presence of the object produces in the sensorial organ. The object has the power of affecting the mind; the mind is susceptible of being affected by the object,—that is to say, when the organ, in consequence of the presence of the external object, exists in a certain state, the affection of the mind immediately follows. If the object were absent, in any particular case, the mind would not exist in the state which constitutes the sensation produced by it; and, if the susceptibility of the mind had been different, the object might have existed, as now, without any subsequent sensation. In all this series of mere changes, or affections, in consequence of certain other preceding changes, or affections, though a part of the series be material, and another part mental, there

is truly, no more mystery than in any other series of changes, in which the series is not in matter and mind successively, but exclusively in one or the other. There is a change of state of one substance, in consequence of a change of some sort in another substance; and this mere sequence of change after change is all which we know in either case. The same Almighty Being, who formed the various substances to which we give the name of *matter*, formed also the substance to which we give the name of *mind*; and the qualities with which he endowed them, for those gracious ends which he intended them to answer, are mere susceptibilities of change, by which, in certain circumstances, they begin immediately to exist in different states. The weight of a body is its tendency to other bodies, varying according to the masses and distances;—in this instance, the quality may be said to be strictly material. The greenness or redness ascribed to certain rays of light, are words expressive merely of changes that arise in the *mind* when these rays are present on the retina; in this case, the quality, though ascribed to the material rays as antecedent, involves the consideration of a certain change of state in the mind which they affect. But the greenness or redness, though involving the consideration both of mind affected, and matter affecting, is not less conceivable by us as a quality of matter than the weight, which also involves the consideration of two substances, affecting and affected, though both go under the name of matter alone. *All* the sequences of phenomena are mysterious, or none are so.

This view of causation, however,—as not more unintelligible in the reciprocal sequences of events in matter and mind than in their separate sequences,—could not occur to philosophers while they retained their mysterious belief of secret links, connecting every observed antecedent with its observed consequent; since mind and matter seemed, by their very nature, unsusceptible of any such common bondage. A peculiar difficulty, therefore, was felt, in the endeavour to account for their mutual successions of phenomena, which vanishes when the necessity of any connecting links in causation is shown to be falsely assumed.

In their views of perception, therefore, as a mental effect produced by a material cause, philosophers appear to have been embarrassed by two great difficulties;—the production of this effect by remote objects,—as when we look at the sun and stars, in their almost inconceivable distances above our heads; and the production of this effect by a substance, which has no common property that renders it capable

of being linked with the mind in the manner supposed to be necessary for causation. These two *supposed* difficulties appear to me to have led to all the wild hypotheses that have been advanced with respect to perception.

The former of these difficulties,—in the remoteness of the object perceived,—even though the principle had not been false, which supposes, that a change cannot take place in any substance, in consequence of the change of position of a distant object,—a principle, which the gravitation of every atom disproves,—arose, it is evident, from false views of the real objects of perception. It is on this account, that I was at some pains, when we entered on our inquiry into the nature of perception, to show the futility of the distinction which is made of objects that act immediately on the senses, and those which act on them through a medium,—the medium in this case, as light in vision, and the vibrating air in sound, being the real object of the particular sense,—and the reference to a more remote object being the result, not of the simple original sensation, but of knowledge previously acquired.

The mistake as to the real object of perception, and the supposed difficulty of action at a distance, must have had very considerable influence in producing the Peripatetic doctrine of perception by species, of which the cumbrous machinery seems to have been little more than a contrivance for destroying, as it were, the distance between the senses and the objects that were supposed to act on them. According to this doctrine, every object is continually throwing off certain shadowy films or resemblances of itself, which may be directly present to our organs of sense, at whatever distance the objects may be, from which they flowed. These species or phantasms,—the belief of the separate existence of which must have been greatly favoured by another tenet of the same school, with respect to *form* as essentially distinct from the *matter* with which it is united, were supposed to be transmitted, in a manner, which there was no great anxiety to explain, to the brain and to the mind itself. I need not detail the process by which these sensible species, through the intervention of what were termed the active and passive intellect, were said to become, at last, intelligible species so as to be objects of our understanding. It is with the mere sensitive part of the process, that we have at present any concern; and in this, of itself, there is sufficient absurdity, without tracing all the further modifications of which the absurdity is capable, if I may speak so lightly of follies that have a name, which for more than a

thousand years, was the most venerable of human names, to pass then current as wisdom,—and which were read and honoured as wisdom by the wise of so many generations.

If vision had been our only sense, we might, perhaps, have understood, at least, what was meant by the species, that directly produce our visual images. But what is the phantasm of a sound or an odour? or what species is it, which, at one moment, produces only the feeling of cold, or hardness, or figure, when a knife is pressed against us, and the next moment, when it penetrates the skin, the pain of a cut? The knife itself is exactly the same unaltered knife, when it is merely pressed against the hand, and when it produces the incision; and the difference, therefore, in the two cases, must arise, not from any *species* which it is constantly throwing off, since these would be the same, at every moment, but from some state of difference in the mere *nerves affected*.

When the doctrine of *species*, as modified, in the dark and barren age of Dialectics, by all the additional absurdities, which the industrious sagacity of the schoolmen could give to it, had at length lost that empire, which it never should have possessed, the original difficulty of accounting for perception, remained as before. If the cause was to be linked, in some manner or other, with its effect, how was matter, so different in all its properties, to be connected with mind?

The shortest possible mode of obviating this difficulty, was, by denying that any direct causation whatever took place between our mind and our bodily organs? and hence arose the system of *occasional causes*, as maintained by the most distinguished of the followers of Des Cartes,—a system, which supposed, that there is no direct agency of our mind on matter, or of matter on our mind,—that we are as *little* capable of moving our own limbs by our volition, as of moving, by our volition, the limbs of any other person,—as little capable of perceiving the rays of light, that have entered our own eyes, as the rays which have fallen on any other eyes,—that our perception or voluntary movement is, therefore, to be referred, in every case, to the immediate agency of the Deity, the presence of rays of light, within our eye, being the mere occasion on which the Deity himself affects our mind with vision, as our desire of moving our limbs is the mere occasion on which the Deity himself puts our limbs in motion.

It is of so much importance to have a full conviction of the dependence of all events on the *great Source of Being*, that it is necessary to strip the doctrine, as much as possible, of every thing truly objection-

able, lest, in abandoning what is objectionable, we should be tempted to abandon also the important truth associated with it. The *power of God* is so magnificent in itself, that it is only when we attempt to add to it in our conception, that we run some risk of degrading what it must always be impossible for us to elevate.

That the changes which take place, whether in mind or in matter, are all, ultimately, resolvable into the will of the Deity, who formed alike the spiritual and material system of the universe, making the earth a habitation worthy of its noble inhabitant,—and *man* an inhabitant almost worthy of that scene of divine magnificence, in which he is placed, is a truth, as convincing to our reason, as it is delightful to our devotion. What confidence do we feel, in our joy, at the thought of the *Eternal Being*, from whom it flows, as if the very thought gave at once security and sanctity to our delight; and how consolatory, in our little hour of suffering, to think of *Him* who *wills* our happiness, and who knows how to produce it, even from sorrow itself, by that power which called light from the original darkness, and still seems to call, out of a similar gloom, the sunshine of every morning. Every joy thus becomes gratitude,—every sorrow resignation. The eye which looks to heaven seems, when it turns again to the scenes of earth, to bring down with it a purer radiance, like the very beaming of the presence of the Divinity, which it sheds on every object on which it gazes.

That the Deity, in this sense, as the *Creator* of the world, and *willer* of all those great ends, which the laws of the universe accomplish,—is the author of the physical changes which take place in it, is most true, —as it is most true, also, that the same Power, who gave the universe its laws, can, for the particular purposes of his providence, vary these at pleasure. But there is no reason to suppose, that the objects which he has made surely for some ends, have, as made by him, no efficacy, no power of being instrumental to his own great purpose, merely because whatever power they can be supposed to have, must have been derived from the Fountain of all power. It is, indeed, only as possessing this power, that we know them to exist; and, their powers, which the doctrine of occasional causes would destroy altogether, are, relatively to us, their whole existence. It is by affecting us that they are known to us. Such is the nature of the mind, and of light, for example, that light cannot be present, or at least, the sensorial organ cannot exist in a certain state, in consequence of its presence, without that instant affection of mind, which constitutes vision. If light have not this power of affecting us with sensation, it is, with

respect to us, nothing,—for we know it only as the cause of the visual affection. That which excites in us the feelings of extension, resistance, and all the qualities of matter, is matter; and, to suppose that there is nothing, without us, which excites these feelings, is to suppose, that there is no matter without, as far as we are capable of forming any conception of matter. The system of occasional causes, seems, therefore, to be only a more awkward and complicated modification of the system of Berkeley; for, as the Deity is, in this system, himself the author of every change, the only conceivable use of matter, which cannot affect us, more than if it were not in existence, must be as a *remembrance*, to Him who is *Omniscience itself*, at what particular moment he is to excite a feeling in the mind of some one of his sensitive creatures, and of what particular kind that feeling is to be; as if the Omniscient could stand in need of any memorial, to excite in our mind any feeling, which it is His wish to excite, and which is to be traced wholly to his own immediate agency. Matter, then, according to this system, has no relation to us; and all its relations are to the Deity alone. The assertors of the doctrine, indeed, seem to consider it, as representing, in a more sublime light, the divine Omnipresence, by exhibiting it to our conception, as the only power in nature; but they might, in like manner, affirm, that the creation of the infinity of worlds, with all the life and happiness that are diffused over them, rendered less instead of more sublime, the existence of Him, who, till then, was the sole existence; for power, that is derived, derogates as little from the primary power, as derived existence derogates from the Being from whom it flows. Yet the assertors of this doctrine, who conceive, that light has no effect in vision, are perfectly willing to admit that light exists, or rather are strenuous affirmers of its existence, and are anxious only to prove, in their zeal for the glory of Him who made it, and who makes nothing in vain, that this, and all His works, exist for no purpose. Light, they contend, has no influence whatever. It is as little capable of exciting sensations of colour, as of exciting a sensation of melody or fragrance; but still it exists. The production of so very simple a state as that of vision, or any other of the modes of perception, with an apparatus, which is not merely complicated, but, in all its complication, absolutely without efficacy of any sort, is so far from edding any sublimity to the divine nature, in our conception, that it can scarcely be conceived by the mind, without lessening, in some degree, the sublimity of the Author of the universe, by lessening, or rather destroying, all the sublimity of the universe which he has made.

The next system which claims our attention, is that of Malebranche, who is, indeed, to be ranked among the principal assertors of the doctrine of *occasional causes*, which we have now been considering, but who, in addition to this general doctrine, had peculiar views of the nature of perception.

His hypothesis is, that we perceive not *objects themselves*, but the *ideas* of them which are in God.

He begins his supposed demonstration of this paradox with a sort of *negative* proof, by attempting to show the inadequacy of every other mode of accounting for our perception of the ideas of things; for I need scarcely state, what is involved in the very enunciation of his metaphysical theorem,—that he regards *ideas* as distinct from perception itself, not the mind affected in a certain manner, but something separate and independent of the mind.

He then proceeds to his *positive* proof, asserting, in the first place, that it is “absolutely necessary that God should have in himself the ideas of all the beings which he has created, since otherwise he could not have produced them;” \* and, in the second place, that God is united to our soul by his presence, “so that he may be said to have that relation of place to the mind, which space has to body.” † Wherever the human mind is, there God is, and consequently all the ideas are in God. We have thus a fund of all the ideas necessary for perception, and a fund, which, in consequence of the *ubiquity* of the divine mind, is ever present, requiring, therefore, for our perception of them, only that divine will, without which no change can take place.

That perception takes place, by the presence of this one stock of ideas eternally present in the divine mind, with which every other mind is united,—rather than by the creation of an infinite number of ideas in each separate mind,—he conceives to be proved, by various reasons,—by the greater simplicity of this mode,—by its peculiar consistency with that state of dependence on the divine Being, as the source of all light, in which the mind of man is represented in many passages of Scripture,—by various notions, such as those of *infinity*, *genera*, *species*, &c., the universality of which he conceived to be inconsistent with the absolute unity and limitation of every idea, that does not derive a sort of infinity from the mind in which it exists,—and by some other reasons, very mystical and very feeble, in which, though it may not be difficult to discover what their author meant, it is certainly very difficult

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\* Recherche de la Vérité, Liv. III, c. vi. † Ibid.



to conceive, how a mind so acute as his, could have been influenced by them.

Notwithstanding his veneration for the greater number of the opinions of Des Cartes, Malebranche unfortunately had not adopted the very enlightened views of that eminent philosopher, with respect to the nature of *ideas*. He considered them as existing distinct from the sentient or percipient mind,—and, reasoning very justly from this error, inferred their presence in the mind of the Deity,—who formed the universe, not casually, but according to conceptions, that must have preceded creation,—the archetypes, or exemplars, of all that was to be created. This opinion, as to the eternal forms subsisting in the divine mind, agrees exactly with that of Plato, in one of the most celebrated of his doctrines, and certainly one of the most poetical,—which, though a term of praise that usually does not imply much excellence of philosophy, is the species of praise to which the philosophy of Plato has the justest claim.

It is in the writings of St. Augustine, however,—who had himself imbibed a considerable portion of the spirit of the Platonic philosophy, that the true source of the hypothesis, which we are now reviewing, is to be found. This very eminent father of the church,—whose acuteness and eloquence would have entitled him to very high consideration, even though his works had related to subjects less interesting to man, than those noble subjects of which they treat,—seems to have met with peculiar honour from the French theologians, and to have given a very evident direction to their intellectual inquiries. It is indeed impossible to read the works of any of the theological metaphysicians of that country, without meeting with constant references to the opinions of St. Austin, and an implied reference, even where it is not expressed,—particularly to the very opinions most analogous to those of Malebranche.

The opinion of Augustine, to which I particularly allude, is that which forms the principle doctrine of his metaphysical philosophy,—that there is a supreme eternal universal *Truth*, which is internally present to every mind, and in which all minds alike perceive the truths, which all alike are, as it were, necessitated to believe,—the truths of arithmetic and geometry, for example, and the primary essential truths of morality.

These truths we feel to be *eternal*, because we feel that they are not contingent on the existence of those who perceive them, but were, and are, and must forever be the same; and we feel also, that the

*truth* is *one*, whatever be the number of individuals that perceive it, and is not converted into many truths, merely by the multitude of believers. "If," says he, "in discoursing of any truth, I perceive that to be true which *you* say, and you perceive that to be true which *I* say,—where, I pray you, do we both see this at the very moment? I certainly see it not in you, nor you in me,—but both see it in that unchangeable truth, which is beyond and above our individual minds."

I am not contending for the justness of the opinion which I am now stating,—I state it merely as illustrative of the system of Malebranche. If we suppose, with Augustine, that there is *one eternal Truth*, which contains all truths, and is present to all minds that perceive in it the truths which it contains, it is but one step more, and scarcely one step more, to believe that our ideas of all things are contained and perceived in one omnipresent Mind, to which all other minds are united, and which is itself the eternal Truth, that is present to all. Indeed, some of the passages which are quoted in the Search of Truth, from St. Austin, show how strongly the author conceived his own opinions to be sanctioned by that ancient authority.

The only remaining hypothesis, which deserves to be noticed, is a very celebrated one, of Leibnitz, the doctrine of the *pre-established harmony*, which, I have no doubt, originated in the same false view of the necessity of some connecting link in causation; and was intended, therefore, like the others, to obviate the supposed difficulty of the action of matter on mind, and of mind on matter.

According to this doctrine, the body never acts on the mind, nor the mind on the body, but the motions of the one and the feelings of the other, are absolutely independent, having as little influence on each other, as they have on any other mind and body. The mind feels pain when the body is bruised, but, from the pre-established order of its own affections, it would have felt exactly the same pain, though the body, at that moment, had been resting upon roses. The arm, indeed, moves at the very moment when the mind has *willed* its motion; but it moves of *itself*, in consequence of its own pre-established order of movement, and would move, therefore, equally, at that very moment, though the mind had wished it to remain at rest. The exact correspondence of the motions and feelings, which we observe, arises merely from the exactness of the choice of the Deity, in uniting with a body, that was formed by Him, to have of itself, a certain order of independent motions, a mind, that was formed of itself to have a certain order of independent but corresponding feelings. In

the unerring exactness of this choice, and mutual adaptation, consists the exquisiteness of the harmony. But, however exquisite, it is still a *harmony* only, without the slightest reciprocal action.

The mind, and its organic frame, are, in this system,—to borrow the illustration of it which is commonly used,—like two *time-pieces*, which have no connexion with each other, however accurately they may agree,—and each of which would indicate the hour, in the very same manner, though the other had been destroyed. In like manner, the soul of Leibnitz,—for the great theorist himself may surely be used to illustrate his own hypothesis,—would, though his body had been annihilated at birth, have felt and acted, as if with its bodily appendage,—studying the same works, inventing the same systems, and carrying on, with the same warfare of books and epistles, the same long course of indefatigable controversy ;—and the *body* of this great philosopher, though his *soul* had been annihilated at birth, would not merely have gone through the same process of growth, eating, and digesting, and performing all its other ordinary *animal* functions,—but would have achieved for itself the same *intellectual* glory, without any consciousness of the works which it was writing and correcting,—would have argued, with equal strenuousness, for the principle of the sufficient reason,—claimed the honours of the differential calculus,—and laboured to prove this very system of the *pre-established harmony*, of which it would, certainly, in that case, have been one of the most illustrious examples.

To say of this hypothesis, which was the dream of a great mind,—but of a mind, I must confess, which was very fond of dreaming, and very apt to dream,—that it is a *mere hypothesis*, is to speak of it too favourably. Like the doctrine of occasional causes, it supposes a system of external things, of which, by the very principle of the hypothesis, there can be no evidence, and which is absolutely of no utility whatever, but as it enables a philosopher to talk more justly of pre-established harmonies, without the possibility, however, of knowing that he is talking more justly. If the mind would have exactly the same feelings as now,—the same pleasures, and pains, and perceptions of men and houses, and every thing external, though every thing external, comprehending of course the very organs of sense, had been annihilated ages of ages before itself existed, what reason can there be to suppose, that this useless system of bodily organs, and other external things, exist at present? The universal irresistible belief of mankind, to which philosophers of a different school might appeal, cannot be

urged in this case, since the admission of it, as legitimate evidence, would at once disprove the hypothesis. We do not more truly believe that light exists, than we believe that it affects us with vision, and that, if there had been no light, there would have been no sensation of colour. To assert the pre-established harmony, is, indeed, almost the same thing, as to affirm and deny the same proposition. It is to affirm, in the first place, positively, that *matter exists*, since the harmony, which it asserts, is of matter and mind; and then to affirm, as positively, that its *existence is useless*, that it cannot be perceived by us, and that we are, therefore, absolutely incapable of knowing whether it exists or not.

I have now finished the remarks which I had to make on the very important class of our *external affections of mind*, as they may be considered *simply*; but it is not always simply that they exist; and, when they occur in combination with other feelings, the appearance which they assume is sometimes so different, as to lead to the erroneous belief, that the complex feeling is the result of a distinct power of the mind.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

### OF THE EXTERNAL AFFECTIONS COMBINED WITH DESIRE.

THE various feelings of which the mind is susceptible, have already been divided into our *external* and *internal* affections, according as their causes are, in the one case, objects without the mind, and, in the other case, previous feelings, or affections of the mind itself; and we have subdivided this latter class of internal affections into the two orders of our *intellectual states* of mind, and our *emotions*. These, it was observed, were not to be considered as always arising separately, and as merely successive to each other;—that, in the same manner, as we may both see and smell a rose, so may we see, or compare, or remember, while under the influence of some or other of our emotions; though, at the same time, by analysis, or at least by a reflective process that is similar to analysis, we may be able to distinguish the emotion from the co-existing perception, or remembrance, or comparison,—as we are able, by a very easy analysis, in like

manner, when we both see and smell a rose, to distinguish in our complex perception, the fragrance from the colour and form.

There is *one* emotion, in particular, that is capable of so many modifications, and has so extensive a sway over human life, which it may be said almost to occupy from the first wishes of our infancy to the last of our old age, that it cannot fail to be combined with many of our other feelings, both sensitive and intellectual. The emotion to which I allude is *desire*; a feeling which may exist of various species and degrees, from the strongest passion of which the mind is susceptible, to the slightest wish of knowing a little more accurately the most trifling object before us;—and though, in speaking of it at present, I am anticipating what, according to the strict division which we have made, should not be brought forward till we consider the emotions in general, this anticipation is absolutely unavoidable for understanding some of the most important phenomena, both of perception, which we have been considering, and of those intellectual faculties which we are soon to consider. Nature is not to be governed by the systems which we form; though our systematic arrangements ought not to be complicated, her phenomena are almost always so; and while every thing is thus intermixed and connected with every thing in the actual phenomena of mind as well as of matter, it would be vain for us to think of accommodating our physical discussions with absolute exactness, even to the most perfect divisions and subdivisions which we may be capable of forming. All that is necessary is, that we should not depart from our order of arrangement without some advantage in view, and an advantage greater than the slight evil which may arise from the appearance of temporary confusion.

The reason of my anticipation, in the present instance, is to explain what I conceive to constitute the phenomena of *attention*,—a state of mind which has been understood to imply the exercise of a peculiar intellectual power, but which, in the case of attention to objects of sense, appears to be nothing more than the co-existence of desire, with the perception of the object to which we are said to attend; as, in attention to other phenomena of the mind, it is, in like manner, the co-existence of a particular desire with these particular phenomena. The desire, indeed, modifies the perception, rendering our feeling more intense, as any other emotion would do, that has equal relation to the object. But there is no operation of any power distinct from the desire and perception themselves.

To understand this fully, however, it may be necessary to make some previous remarks on the *co-existence of sensations*.

In the circumstances in which we are placed by our beneficent Creator, in a world of objects capable of exciting in us various feelings, and with senses awake to the profusion of delight,—breathing and moving in the midst of odours, and colours, and sounds, and pressed alike in gentle reaction, whether our limbs be in exercise or repose, by that firm soil which supports us, or the softness on which we rest,—in all this mingling action of external things, there is scarcely a moment in which any one of our feelings can be said to be truly simple.

Even when we consider but one of our organs, to the exclusion of all the others, how innumerable are the objects that concur in producing the complex affections of a single sense? In the eye, for example, how wide a scene is open to us, wherever our glance may be turned!—woods, fields, mountains, rivers, the whole atmosphere of light, and that magnificent luminary, which converts into light the whole space through which it moves, as if incapable of existing but in splendour. The mere opening of our eye-lid is like the withdrawing of a veil, which before covered the universe:—It is more; it is almost like saying to the universe which had perished, “Exist again!”

Innumerable objects, then, are constantly acting together on our organs of sense; and it is evident, that many of these can, at once, produce an effect of some sort in the mind, because we truly perceive them as a co-existing whole. It is not a single point of light only which we see, but a wide landscape; and we are capable of comparing various parts of the landscape with each other,—of distinguishing various odours in the compound fragrance of the meadow or the garden,—of feeling the harmony of various co-existing melodies.

The various sensations, then, may *co-exist*, so as to produce one complex affection. When they do co-exist, it must be remarked, that they are individually less intense. The same sound, for example, which is scarcely heard in the tumult of the day, is capable of affecting us powerfully if it recur in the calm of the night; not that it is then absolutely louder, but because it is no longer mingled with other sounds, and other sensations of various kinds, which rendered it weaker, by co-existing with it. It may be regarded, then, as a general law of our perceptions, that when many sensations co-exist, each individually is less vivid than if it existed alone.

It may be considered almost as another form of the same proposition to say, that when many sensations co-exist, each is not merely weaker,

but less distinct from the others with which it is combined. When a few voices sing together, we easily recognise each separate voice. In a very full chorus, we distinguish each with more difficulty; and, if a great multitude were singing together, we should scarcely be able to distinguish any one voice from the rest, more than to distinguish the noise of a single billow, or a single dashing of a few particles of agitated air, in the whole of the thunders of the ocean and the storm.

When many sensations co-exist, and are, therefore, of course weaker and less distinct, if any one were suddenly to become much more intense, the rest would fade in proportion, so as scarcely to be felt. A thousand faint sounds murmur around us, which are instantly hushed by any loud noise. If, when we are looking at the glittering firmament of stars in a winter night, any one of those distant orbs were to become as radiant as our own sun, which is itself but the star of our planetary system, there can be no question, that, like our sun on its rising, it would quench with its brilliancy, all those little glimmering lights, which would still shine on us, indeed, as before, but would shine on us without being perceived. It may be regarded, then, as another general law of the mind, that when many sensations co-exist of equal intensity, the effect of the *increased* intensity of one, is a *diminished* intensity of those which co-exist with it.

Let us now, for the application of these remarks, consider, what it is which takes place in attention, when many objects are together acting on our senses, and we attend, perhaps, only to a single sensation. As a mere description of the process, I cannot use a happier exemplification, than that which Condillac has given us in his *Logique*.

Let us imagine a castle, which commands, from its elevation, an extensive view of a domain, rich with all the beauties of nature and art. It is night when we arrive at it. The next morning our window-shutters open at the moment when the sun has risen above the horizon,—and close again the very moment after.

Though the whole sweep of country was shown to us but for an instant, we must have seen every object which it comprehends within the sphere of our vision. In a second or a third instant we could have received only the same impressions which we received at first; consequently, though the window had not been closed again, we should have continued to see but what we saw before.

This first instant, however, though it unquestionably showed us all the scene, gave us no real knowledge of it; and, when the windows were closed again, there is not one of us who could have ventured to

give even the slightest description of it,—a sufficient proof, that we may have seen many objects, and yet have learned nothing.

At length the shutters are opened again, to remain open while the sun is above the horizon ; and we see once more what we saw at first. Even now, however, if, in a sort of ecstasy, we were to continue to see at once, as in the first instant, all this multitude of different objects, we should know as little of them when the night arrived, as we knew when the window-shutters were closed again after the very moment of their opening.

To have a knowledge of the scene, then, it is not sufficient to behold it *all at once*, so as to comprehend it in a single gaze ; we must consider it *in detail*, and pass successively from object to object. This is what Nature has taught us all. If she has given us the power of seeing many objects at once, she has given us also the faculty of looking at one,—that is to say, of directing our eyes on one only of the multitude ; and it is to this faculty,—which is a result of our organization, says Condillac,—that we owe all the knowledge which we acquire from sight.

The faculty is common to us all ; and yet, if afterwards we were to talk of the landscape which we had all seen, it would be very evident, that our knowledge of it would not be exactly the same. By some of us, a picture might be given of it with tolerable exactness, in which there would be many objects such as they were, and many certainly, which had very little resemblance to the parts of the landscape which we wished to describe. The picture which others might give, would probably be so confused, that it would be quite impossible to recognise the scene in the description, and yet all had seen the same objects, and nothing but the same objects. The only difference is, that some of us had wandered from object to object irregularly, and that others had looked at them in a certain order.

Now, what is this order ? Nature points it out to us herself. It is the very order in which she presents to us objects. There are some which are more striking than others, and which, of themselves, almost call to us to look at them ; they are the *predominant objects*, around which the others seem to arrange themselves. It is to them, accordingly, that we give our first attention ; and when we have remarked their relative situations, the others gradually fill up the intervals.

We begin, then, with the principal objects ; we observe them in succession ; we compare them, to judge of their relative positions. When these are ascertained, we observe the objects that fill up the



intervals, comparing each with the principal object, till we have fixed the positions of all.

When this process of successive, but regular observations, is accomplished, we know all the objects and their situations, and can embrace them with a single glance. Their order, in our mind, is no longer an order of mere succession; it is simultaneous. It is that in which they exist, and we see it at once distinctly.

The comprehensive knowledge thus acquired, we owe to the mere skill with which we have directed our eyes from object to object. The knowledge has been acquired in parts successively; but, when acquired, it is present at once to our mind, in the same manner, as the objects which it retraces to us, are all present to the single glance of the eye that beholds them.

This description is a very faithful representation of a process of which we must all repeatedly have been conscious. It seems to me, however, faithful as it is, as a mere description, to leave the great difficulty unexplained, and even unremarked. We see a multitude of objects, and we have one complex indistinct feeling. We wish to know the scene more accurately, and in consequence of this wish, though the objects themselves continue as before, we no longer seem to view them all, but only one, or a few; and the few, which we now see, we see more distinctly. Such I conceive to be the process; but the difference is, that though we seem to view only a few objects, and these much more distinctly, the field of the eye still comprehends a wide expanse, the light from which scarcely affects us, while the light from other parts of it, though not more brilliant, produces in us distinct perception. It is vain for Condillac to say, that it is in consequence of a faculty which we have of directing our eyes on one subject, a faculty which is the result of our organization, and which is common to all mankind; for, in the first place, if this direction of our eyes, of which he speaks, on a single object, be meant, in its strict sense, of the eye itself, which we direct, it is not true that we have any such faculty. We cannot direct our eyes so as not to comprehend equally in our field of vision, many objects beside that single object which is supposed to have fixed our attention; and if, by the direction of our eyes, be meant the exclusive or limited perception by our mind itself, there remains the difficulty,—how it happens, that while light from innumerable objects falls on our retina as before, it no longer produces any distinct vision relatively to the objects from which it comes,—while light certainly not more brilliant, from other objects, produces vision

much more distinct than before. Let us consider this difficulty, which in truth, constitutes the principal phenomenon of attention, a little more fully.

When Condillac speaks of the faculty of the mind, by which he supposes it capable of directing the eye, exclusively, on certain objects, he must speak of that only, of which we are conscious, previously to the the more distinct perception of those objects, as certain parts of the scene.

What is it, then, of which we are conscious, between the indistinct perception of the wide scene, and the distinct perception of parts of the scene?

In the first place, there is a general desire of knowing the scene more accurately. This is the primary feeling of the process of attention. But this primary feeling is soon succeeded by others. Indistinct as the whole complex scene may be, some parts of it, more brilliant, or more striking in general character, are less indistinct than others. There are a few more prominent parts, as Condillac says, around which the rest are indistinctly arranged.

With some *one* of these, then, as in itself more impressive and attractive, we begin; our general desire of knowing the whole scene having been followed by a wish to know this principal part more accurately.

The next step is to prevent the eye itself from wandering, that no new objects may distract it, and that there may be as little confusion as possible of the rays from different objects, on that part of the retina, on which the rays fall from the particular object which we wish to consider. We fix our eyes, therefore, and our whole body, as steadily as we can, by the muscles subservient to these purposes.

So far, unquestionably, no new faculty is exercised. We have merely *the desire* of knowing the scene before us,—the selection of some prominent object, or rather the mere perception of it, as peculiarly prominent,—the desire of knowing it particularly,—and the contraction of a few muscles, in obedience to our volition.

No sooner, however, has all this taken place, than instantly, or almost instantly, and without our consciousness of any new and peculiar state of mind intervening in the process, the landscape becomes to our vision altogether different. Certain parts only, those parts which we wished to know more particularly, are seen by us; the remaining parts seem almost to have vanished. It is as if every thing before had been but the doubtful colouring of enchantment, which had disappeared, and

left to us the few prominent realities on which we gaze ; or rather, it is as if some instant enchantment, obedient to our wishes, had dissolved every reality besides, and brought closer to our sight the few objects which we desired to see.

Still, however, all of which we are truly conscious, as preceding immediately the change of appearance in the scene, is the mere desire, of which I have spoken, combined certainly with expectation of that more distinct vision which follows. There may be a combination of feelings, but no new and peculiar feeling, either as simple, or co-existing with other feelings,—no indication, in short, of the exercise of *new power*.

Even though we should be incapable, therefore, of understanding how the desire should have this effect, it would not be the less true, that the desire of knowing accurately a particular object in a group, is instantly,—or, at least, instantly after some organic change which may probably be necessary,—followed by a more vivid and distinct perception of the particular object, and a comparative faintness and indistinctness of the other objects that co-exist with it ; and that what we call attention is nothing more.

If we can discover any reason why this should become more vivid the comparative indistinctness of the other parts of the scene may be considered as following of course.

Such a cause exists, unquestionably, in that feeling of desire, without which there can be no attention. To attend, is to have a desire of knowing that to which we attend, and attention without desire is a verbal contradiction,—an inconsistency, at least, as great as if we were said to desire to know without any desire of knowing, or to be attentive without attention.

That it is the nature of our *emotions* of every sort, to render more vivid all the mental affections with which they are peculiarly combined, as if their own vivacity were in some measure divided with these, every one who has felt any strong emotion, must have experienced. The eye has, as it were, a double quickness, to perceive what we love or hate, what we hope or fear. Other objects may be seen slightly ; but these, if seen at all, become instantly permanent, and cannot appear to us without impressing their presence, as it were, in stronger feeling on our senses and our soul.

Such is the effect of emotion, when combined even with sensations that are of themselves, by their own nature, vivid ; and mark, therefore, less strikingly, the increase of vividness received. The vivifying

effect, however, is still more remarkable, by its relative proportion, when the feelings with which the emotion is combined, are in themselves peculiarly faint, as in the case of mere memory or imagination. The object of any of our emotions, thus merely conceived by us, becomes, in many cases, so vivid, as to render even our accompanying perceptions comparatively faint. The mental absence of *lovers*, for example, is proverbial; and what is thus termed, in popular language, *absence*, is nothing more than the greater vividness of some mere conception, or other internal feeling, than of any or all of the external objects present at the time, which have no peculiar relation to the prevailing emotion.

What brighter colours the fears of *superstition* give to the dim objects perceived in twilight, the inhabitants of the village who have to pass the churchyard at any late hour, and the little students of ballad lore, who have carried with them, from the nursery, many tales which they almost tremble to remember, know well. And in the second sight of this northern part of the island, there can be no doubt, that the objects which the seers conceive themselves to behold, truly are more vivid, as conceptions, than, but for the superstition and the melancholy character of the natives, which harmonize with the objects of this gloomy foresight, they would have been; and that it is in consequence of this brightening effect of the emotion, as concurring with the dim and shadowy objects which the vapoury atmosphere of our lakes and vallies presents, that fancy, relatively to the individual, becomes a temporary reality. The *gifted eye*, which has once believed itself favored with such a view of the future, will of course, ever after have a quicker foresight, and more frequent revelations; its own wilder emotion communicating still more vivid forms and colours to the objects which it dimly perceives.

When the emotion is very violent, as in the violence of any of our fiercer passions, though it still renders every object, with which it harmonizes, more vivid and prominent, it mingles with them some degree of its own confusion of feeling. It magnifies and distorts; and what it renders brighter, it does not therefore render more distinct.

Emotions of a calmer species have the *vivifying* effect, without the *indistinctness*; and precisely of this degree is that desire which constitutes attention as co-existing with the sensations, or other feelings to which we are said to attend.

We have found, then, in the desire which accompanies attention, or rather which chiefly constitutes it, the cause of that increased intensity which we sought.

When all the various objects of a scene are of themselves equally, or nearly equally, interesting or indifferent to us, the union of *desire*, with any particular perception of the group, might be supposed, *a priori*, to render this perception in some degree more vivid than it was before. It is not necessary that this difference of vividness should take place wholly, or even be very striking, in the first instant; for, by becoming in the first instant even slightly more vivid, it acquires additional colouring and prominence, so as to increase that interest, which led us originally to select it for our first minute observation, and thus to brighten it more and more progressively. Indeed, when we reflect on our consciousness, during what is called *an effort of attention*, we feel that some such progress as this really takes place, the object becoming gradually more distinct while we gaze, till at length it requires a sort of effort to turn away to the other co-existing objects, and to renew with them the same process.

Attention, then, is not a simple mental state, but a process, or a combination of feelings. It is not the result of any peculiar power of the mind, but of those mere laws of perception, by which the increased vividness of one sensation produces a corresponding faintness of others co-existing with it, and of that law of our emotions, by which they communicate greater intensity to every perception, or other feeling, with which they co-exist and harmonize.

The phantasms of imagination, in the reveries of our waking hours, when our external senses are still open, and quick to feel, are, as mere conceptions, far less vivid than the primary perceptions, from which they originally flowed; and yet, under the influence of any strong emotion, they become so much more bright and prominent than external things, that, to the impassioned muser, on distant scenes and persons, the scenes and persons truly around him, are almost, as if they were not in existence. If a mere conception, then, faint as it must always be by its own nature, can thus be rendered more vivid than reality, by the union of any strong *desire*, it is surely less wonderful, that the same cause should communicate the same superior vividness to the brighter realities of perception.

In addition to this direct vivifying influence of the desire itself, some part,—and perhaps a very considerable part—of the brightening of the object, during attention, may arise indirectly from the mere muscular adaptation of the organ. I do not speak merely of that *internal* adaptation, whatever it may be, which accommodates the organ to the object, and, therefore, varies with the distance of the object, but of that

simpler contraction, which keeps the organ, as a whole, steadily fixed. It is proved by many facts, that a certain time is necessary, for vision, and, probably, in like manner, for all our perceptions. A cannon ball, for example, though it must have reflected light to us, during its passage, may yet pass before our eyes, so rapidly as not to be perceived ; and, if a part of the eye be affected in a certain manner, by one colour, and a different colour fall upon it so rapidly after the first, that the former affection has not previously ceased, the result is not the visual affection, which the second colour alone would have produced, but that which would have arisen at once from a mixture of the two colours. In this way, in an experiment which has been often performed, for the demonstration of this simple and beautiful fact ; if a cylinder be painted in longitudinal bars, with the prismatic colours, in certain proportions, and be revolved rapidly on its axis, its surface to the eye will not seem to present any one of the colours which are really painted on it, but an uniform *whiteness*, which it has not, on a single point of its whole surface.

If rays of different colours, falling in rapid succession on the same points of the retina, thus seem to mingle with each other, and produce one confused effect, it must evidently be of great importance, for distinct vision, that the eyes should be so fixed, that the rays from the objects which we wish to observe, may not fall on some parts of the retina, previously affected by the light of other objects, but, as much as possible, on the same parts, during the whole time of our observation. This can be done, as I have said, only by the continued agency of certain muscles ; and hence arises that feeling of *muscular effort*, of which we are conscious in the process. How difficult it is for us to keep a muscle, for any length of time, in the same exact point of contraction, without the slightest deviation from this point, is well known to physiologists ; and it is not wonderful, therefore, that in attention, we should be conscious of a considerable effort, in endeavouring to fix steadily any of our organs. The power of thus fixing our muscles, is a power which improves by habitual exercise ; and it is probably very much in this way, that the practised eye is able so rapidly to distinguish the minute parts of objects, which require from others a much longer effort of attention.

But, whatever the effect of the *muscular adaptation* may be, it is not the less certain, if we reflect on our feelings, that the mental part of the process of attention involves nothing more, in addition to the primary perception, which is its object, than *desire with expectation*.

This is all of which we are truly conscious, previously to the brightening of the perception itself, to which we are said to attend ;—a brightening, which, from the general laws of emotion, might very naturally be expected as the result of the union of desire, with any of our sensations. In such circumstances, then, it is not wonderful, that we should remember best the objects to which we pay most attention, since this is only to say, that we remember best the objects on which we have dwelt longest, and with greatest interest, and which we have, therefore, known most accurately.

Such are our sensations or perceptions, when united with desire, exhibiting appearances, which seem, at first, to indicate, though they do not truly indicate, a peculiar power or susceptibility of the mind.

## PART III.

### OF THE INTELLECTUAL STATES OF THE MIND.

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#### CHAPTER I.

##### OF THE INTERNAL AFFECTIONS OF MIND.—CLASSIFICATION OF THEM.

##### SECTION I.

THE Divine Contriver of our mental frame, who formed the soul to exist in certain states, on the presence of external things, formed it also to exist, in certain successive states, without the presence or direct influence of any thing external; the one state of the mind being as immediately the cause of the state of mind which follows it, as, in our external feelings, the change produced in our corporeal organ of sense, is the cause of any one of the particular affections of that class. In the one class, that of our internal affections, the phenomena depend on the laws which regulate the successive changes of state of the mind itself. In the other class, that of our external affections, they depend on the laws of the mind, indeed, which is susceptible of these peculiar changes of state; but they depend, in an equal degree, on the laws which give to matter its peculiar qualities, and, consequently, its peculiar influence on this mental susceptibility. If light were to be annihilated, it is very evident, that, though our mind itself were to continue endowed with all its present susceptibilities, it never again could behold the sun, around whose cold and gloomy mass our earth might still revolve as now; nor, in such circumstances, is there any reason to suppose that it would exist in any one of those various states, which constitute the delightful sensations of vision. These sensations, then, depend on external things,



as much as on the mind itself. But though, after we have once been enriched with the splendid acquisitions, which our perceptive organs afford us, every thing external were to vanish, not from our sight merely, but from all our senses, and our mind alone were to exist in the infinity of space, together with that Eternal Majesty which formed it,—still thought after thought, and feeling after feeling, would arise, as it were, spontaneously, in the disembodied spirit,—if no change in its nature were to take place; and the whole world of light, and fragrance, and harmony, would, in its remembrance, almost rise again, as if outliving annihilation itself. It is by this capacity of internal change of state, indeed, that the soul is truly immortal, which, if it were capable of no affections, but those which I have termed external, would itself be virtually as mortal as all the mortal things that are around it; since but for them, as causes of its feelings, it could not, in these circumstances of complete dependence, have any feelings whatever, and could, therefore, exist only in that state of original insensibility, which preceded the first sensation that gave it consciousness of existence. It is, in the true sense of immortality of life, immortal, only because it depends for its feelings, as well as for its mere existence, not on the state of perishable things, which are but the atmosphere that floats around it, but on its own independent laws; or at least,—for the laws of mind, as well as the laws of matter, can mean nothing more,—depends, for the successions of its feelings, only on the provident arrangements of that All-foreseeing Power, whose will, as it existed at the very moment at which it called every thing from nothing, and gave to mind and matter their powers and susceptibilities, is thus, consequently, in the whole series of effects, from age to age, the eternal legislation of the universe.

Even while our soul is united to this bodily frame, and continually capable of being affected by the objects that are continually present with it, by far the greater number of our feelings are those which arise from our *internal* successions of thought. Innumerable as our perceptions are, they are but a small part of the varied consciousness of a day. We do not see, or feel, objects merely, for this alone would be of little value,—but we compare them with each other,—we form plans of action, and prosecute them with assiduous attention,—or we meditate on the means by which they may most effectually be prosecuted; and with all our perceptions of external things, and plans of serious thought, a continued fairy work of involuntary fancy, is incessantly mingling, in consequence of the laws of suggestion in the mind itself,

like the transient shadows, on a stream, of the clouds that flit over it, which picture on it their momentary forms, as they pass in rapid variety, without affecting the course of the busy current, which glides along in its majestic track, as if they had never been.

The *internal* states of mind, then, which form the class next to be considered, present to our inquiry no narrow or uninteresting field. We are to find in these again, every thing, though in fainter colours, which delighted and interested us in the former class; while we are, at the same time, to discover an abundant source of feelings still more delightful and sublime in themselves, and still more interesting to our analysis. We are no longer mere *sensitive* beings, that gaze upon the universe, and feel pain or pleasure as a few of its elementary particles touch our nerves. We are the discoverers of laws, which every element of the universe obeys,—the tracers of events of ages that are past,—the calculators and prophets of events, that are not to occur till generation after generation of the prophetic calculators that succeed us shall themselves have passed away;—and, while we are thus able to discover the innumerable relations of created things, we are, at the same time, by the medium of these internal states of our own mind, the discoverers also of that infinite Being, who framed every thing which it is our glory to be capable merely of observing, and who, without acting directly on any of our organs of sense, is yet present to our intellect with as bright a reality of perception, as the suns and planets which he has formed are present to our corporeal vision.

The species of philosophical inquiry, which our *internal* affections of mind admit, is exactly the same as that which our *external* affections admit; that is to say, we are, in our inquiry, to consider the circumstances in which they arise, and the circumstances which follow them, with the relations which they appear to us mutually to bear to our *external* feelings, and to each other, and nothing more. It is as little possible for us, independently of experience, to discover *a priori*, any reason that one state of mind should be followed directly by another state of mind, as, in the case of our external feelings, to discover any reason, that the presence of light should be followed by that particular mental state which constitutes the sensation of colour, not by that which constitutes the perception of the song of a nightingale, or the fragrance of a violet,—or that those external causes should be followed by their peculiar sensations, rather than by the perception of colour. It is equally vain for us to think of discovering any reason, in the nature of the mind itself, which could have enabled us to predict, without actual

experience, or, at least, without analogy of other similar instances, any of the mere intellectual changes of state,—that the sight of an object, which we have seen before in other circumstances, should recall, by instant spontaneous suggestion, those other circumstances which exist no longer ;—that in meeting, in the most distant country, a native of our own land, it should be in our power, by a single word to annihilate, as it were, for the moment, all the seas and mountains between him and his home ;—or, in the depth of the most gloomy dungeon, where its wretched tenant, who has been its tenant for half a life, sees, and scarcely sees, the few faint rays that serve but to speak of a sunshine, which he is not to enjoy, and which they deprive him of the comfort of forgetting, and to render visible to his very eyes that wretchedness which he feels at his heart,—that even this creature of misery,—whom no one in the world perhaps remembers but the single being, whose regular presence, at the hour at which he gives him, day by day, the means of adding to his life another year of wretchedness like the past, is scarcely felt as the presence of another living thing,—should yet, by the influence of a single thought, enter into the instant possession of a freedom beyond that which the mere destruction of his dungeon could give,—a freedom which restores him not merely to the *liberty*, but to the very *years* which he had lost,—to the woods, and the brook, and the fields of his boyish frolics, and to all the happy faces, which were only as happy as his own. The innumerable examples of such successions of thought we know from experience, but from experience only. It is enough for us, however, to ascertain the simple fact, that the internal suggestions of thought after thought, without the recurrence of any external object does take place, as truly as sensation itself, when external objects recur,—to observe the general circumstances relating to the suggestion,—and to arrange the principle on which it seems to depend, as a principle of our intellectual constitution.

In the classification of our internal feelings, as in every classification, and, indeed, in every thing, intellectual or moral, which can exercise us, it is evident, that we may err in *two* ways, by excess or deficiency. We may multiply divisions without necessity, or we may labour in vain to force into one division individual diversities, which cannot, by any labour, be made to correspond. The *golden mean*, of which moralists speak, is as important in science as in our practical views of happiness ; and the habit of this cautious speculative moderation, is probably of as difficult attainment in the one, as the habitual contentment which is necessary to the enjoyment of the other.

When we think of the infinite variety of the physical objects around us, and of the small number of classes in which they are at present arranged, it would seem to us, if we were ignorant of the history of philosophy, that the regular progress of classification must have been to simplify, more and more, the general circumstances of agreement on which arrangement depends; that, in this progressive simplification, millions of diversities must have been originally reduced to thousands, these, afterwards, to hundreds,—and these again, successively, to divisions still more minute. But the truth is, that this simplicity of division is far from being so progressive in the arrangement even of external things. The first steps of classification, must, indeed, uniformly be, to reduce the great multitude of obvious diversities to some less extensive tribes. But the mere guess-work of hypothesis soon comes in to supply the place of laborious observation or experiment, and of that slow and accurate reasoning on observations and experiments, which, to minds of very rapid imagination, is perhaps a labour as wearisome, as, in the long observation itself, to watch for hours, with an eye fixed like the telescope through which it gazes, one constant point of the heavens, or to minister to the furnace, and hang over it in painful expectance of the transmutations which it tardily presents. By the unlimited power of an hypothesis, we in a moment range together, under one general name, myriads of diversities the most obstinately discordant; as if the mere giving of a name could of itself alter the qualities of things, making similar what was dissimilar before, like words of magic, that convert any thing into any thing. When the hypothesis is proved to be false, the temporary magic of the spell is of course dissolved; and all the original diversities appear again, to be ranged once more in a wider variety of classes. Even where, without any such guess-work of hypothetical resemblance, divisions and arrangements have been formed on the justest principles, according to the qualities of objects known at the time, some new observation, or new experiment, is continually showing differences of composition or of general qualities, where none were conceived before; and the same philosophy is thus, at the same moment, employed in uniting and disuniting,—in reducing many objects to a few, and separating a few into many,—as the same electric power, at the moment in which it is *attracting* objects nearer to it, *repels* others which were almost in contiguity, and often brings the same object close to it, only to throw it off the next moment to a greater distance. While a nicer artificial analysis, or more accurate observation, is detecting unsuspected resem-

blances, and, still more frequently, unsuspected diversities, there is hence no fixed point nor regular advance, but a sort of ebb and flow of wider and narrower divisions and subdivisions; and the classes of an intervening age may be fewer than the classes both of the age which preceded it, and of that which comes after it. For a very striking example of this alternation, I may refer to the history of the science, which is to matter, what our intellectual analysis is to mind. The elements of bodies have been more and fewer successively, varying with the analysis of almost every distinguished chemist; far from having fewer principles of bodies, as chemistry advances, how many more *elements* have we now than in the days of Aristotle! There can be no question, that when man first looked around him with a philosophic eye, and saw, in the sublime rudeness of nature, something more than objects of savage rapacity, or still more savage indifference, he must have conceived the varieties of bodies to be innumerable; and could as little have thought of comprehending them all under a few simple names, as of comprehending the whole earth itself within his narrow grasp. In a short time, however, this narrow grasp, if I may venture so to express myself, did strive to comprehend the whole earth; and soon after man had made the first great advance in science, of wondering at the infinity of things in which he was lost, we had sages, such as Thales, Anaximenes, and Heraclitus, who were forming every thing of a *single principle*,—water, or air, or fire. The four elements, which afterwards reigned so long in the schools of physics, gave place to a *single principle* with the alchemists; or to three principles,—*salt, sulphur, and mercury*,—with chemists less bold in conjecture. These, again, were soon multiplied by observers of still nicer discrimination; and modern chemistry, while it has shown some bodies, which we regarded as different, to be composed of the same elements, has, at the same time shown, that what we regarded as elements, are themselves compounds of elements which we knew not before.

To him who looks back on the history of our own science, the analytic science of mind, which, as I have already said, may almost be regarded, in its most important aspects, as a sort of intellectual chemistry,—there will appear the same alternate widening and narrowing of classification. The mental phenomena are, in one age or country, of many classes; in a succeeding age, or in a different country, they are of fewer; and again, after the lapse of another age, or the passage of a river or a mountain, they are many more. In our own island, after the decay of scholastic metaphysics, from *Hobbes* to *Hume*,—if I may

use these names, as dates of eras, in a science, on which, with all their unfortunate errors on many of the most important points of human belief, they both unquestionably threw a degree of light, which rendered their errors on these subjects the more to be lamented,—in this long and brilliant period,—which of course includes, with many other eminent names, the very eminent author of the *Essay on the Human Understanding*,—there was a tendency to simplify, as much as possible, the classification of the phenomena of mind; and more regard, perhaps, was paid to the similarities of phenomena, than to their differences. Subsequently to this period, however, the philosophy of Dr. Reid, and, in general, of the metaphysicians of this part of the island, has had the opposite tendency,—to enlarge, as I conceive, far beyond what was necessary, the number of classes which they considered as too limited before; and, in proportion, more regard has perhaps been paid to the differences, or supposed differences of phenomena, than to their resemblances. There can be no doubt, at least, that we are now accustomed to speak of more powers or operations of the mind, than even the schoolmen themselves, fond as they were of all the nicest subtleties of infinitesimal subdivision.

The difference in this respect, however, is not so striking, when we consider successions of ages, in which, of course, from our general notion of the effects of time, we are accustomed to expect variety, as when we look to neighbouring countries at the same period, especially if we consider the advantage of that noble art, which might have been supposed, by the wide diffusion which it gives to opinion, to have removed, as to human sentiment, all the boundaries of mere geographic distance. Slight, however, as the distance is which separates the two countries, the philosophy of France, in its views of the phenomena of mind, and the philosophy of Britain, particularly of this part of Britain, have, for more than half a century, differed as much as in the philosophy of different ages; certainly in a degree far greater, than, but for experience, it would have been easy for us to suppose. In France, all the phenomena of mind have been, during that period, regarded as sensations, or transformed sensations, that is to say, as sensations variously simplified or combined. The works of Condillac, who professed to have founded his system on that of Locke, but who evidently did not understand fully what Locke intended, gave the principal tone to this philosophic belief; and it has been fostered since by that passion for the simple and the wonderful, which, when these two objects can

be united, is perhaps the strongest of all our intellectual passions. In the system of the French metaphysicians, they are united in a very high degree.

## SECTION II.

Of this system,—which deserves some fuller notice, on account both of the great talents which have stated and defended it, and of its very wide diffusion,—I may remark, in the first place, that it is far from being, what its author and his followers consider it to be, a mere development of the system of our illustrious countryman. On the contrary, they agree with Locke only in one point, and that a negative one,—as to which all philosophers may now be considered as unanimous,—the *denial* of what were termed *innate ideas*. In every thing which can be strictly said to be *positive* in his system, this great philosopher is nearly as completely opposed to Condillac and his followers, as to the unintelligible wranglers of the ancient schools. To convince any one of this, a very slight statement of the two systems will be sufficient.

According to Locke, the mind, to whose existence thought or feeling is not essential, might, but for sensation, have remained forever without feeling of any kind. From *sensation* we acquire our first *ideas*. These ideas we cannot merely remember as past, and compound or decompound them in various ways, but we can compare them in all their variety of relations; and according as their objects are agreeable or disagreeable, can love or hate those objects, and fear or hope their return. We remember not external things only, so as to have ideas of them,—ideas of sensation,—but we remember also our very *remembrance itself*,—our abstractions, comparisons, love, hate, hope, fear, and all the varieties of reflex thought, or feeling; and our remembrance of these internal feelings, or operations of our mind, furnishes another abundant source of ideas, which he terms ideas of reflection. The *comparison*, however,—and it is this point alone which can be of any consequence in reference to the French system,—the comparison, as a state of the mind, even when it is exercised on our sensations or perceptions, is not itself a sensation or perception,—nor is our hope, or fear, or any other of our reflex feelings; for then, instead of the two sources of our ideas, the distinction of which forms the very groundwork of the Essay on the Human Understanding, we should truly have but one source, and our ideas of reflection would themselves be the very

ideas of sensation to which they are opposed. Our sensations, indeed, directly or indirectly give rise to our reflex feelings, but they do not involve them; they are only prior in order,—the occasions, on which certain powers or susceptibilities of feeling in the mind evolve themselves.

Such is the system of Locke, on those very points, on which the French philosophers most strangely profess to regard him as their great authority. But it is surely very different from the system which they affect to found on it. According to them, sensation is not merely that primary affection of mind, which gives occasion to our other feelings, but is itself, as variously composed or decomposed, all the variety of our feelings. “If we consider,” says Condillac, in a paragraph, which may be said to contain a summary of his whole doctrine, with respect to the mind—“if we consider that to remember, to compare, to judge, to distinguish, to imagine, to be astonished, to have abstract ideas, to have ideas of number and duration, to know truths, whether general or particular, are but so many modes of being attentive; that to have passions, to love, to hate, to hope, to fear, to will, are but so many different modes of desire; and that *attention* in the one case, and *desire* in the other case, of which all these feelings are modes, are themselves, in their origin, nothing more than modes of sensation, we cannot but conclude, that sensation *involves* in itself—*enveloppe*—all the faculties of the soul.” \*

Whatever we may think of this doctrine, as true or false, ingenious or absurd, it seems, at least, scarcely possible, that we should regard it as the doctrine of Locke—of him who sets out with a primary division of our ideas, into two distinct classes, one class of which alone belongs to sensation; and who considers even this class of our mere ideas, not as involving all the operations of the mind with respect to them, but only as the objects of the mind, in these various operations;—as being what we compare, not the very feeling of our comparison itself—the *inducements* to passion, not what constitutes any of our passions, as a state, or series of states, of the mind. To render the paragraph, which I have quoted from Condillac, at all accordant with the real doctrine of Locke, it would be necessary to reverse it, in almost every proposition which it involves.

The doctrine, then, as exhibited by Condillac and his followers, whatever merit it may have in itself, or however void it may be of merit of any kind, is not the doctrine of him from whom it is said to be

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\* *Traité des Sensations*, Part I. Chap. vii. Sect. 2.



derived. But its agreement or disagreement with the system of any other philosopher, is comparatively of very little consequence. The great question is whether it be *just*,—whether it truly have the merit of presenting a faithful picture of the mental phenomena, which it professes to develop to us more clearly.

Have we reason to believe, then, that all the various feelings of our mind which form the classification of its internal affections, are merely, to use Condillac's phrase, *transformed sensations*?

Transformed sensations, it is evident, on his own principles, though the phrase might seem vague and ambiguous, in any other system, can mean nothing more than sensations more or less lively, or more or less complex. It cannot signify any thing that is absolutely different or superadded; for if there be any thing in any complex feeling of the mind, which did not originally form a sensation, or a part of a complex sensation, this addition, however slight, is itself a proof, that all the phenomena of the mind are not mere sensations, variously repeated—~~that~~ sensation, in short, does not “*involve*” all the affections and faculties of the soul.

Is every feeling, then, in the whole series of our varied consciousness, referable, in all its parts, to *sensation*, as its original source?—not its source merely, in one very evident respect, as that which is, in order, truly primary to all our other feelings, but as that which essentially constitutes them all, in the same manner as the waters of the fountain are afterwards the very waters which flow along the mead?

To prove the affirmative of this, it is astonishing with what readiness Condillac,—who is generally regarded as a nice and subtile reasoner, and who certainly, as his work on that subject shows, had studied with attention the great principles of logic,—passes from faculty to faculty, and from emotion to emotion, professing to find sensation everywhere, without exhibiting to us even the semblance of what he seeks, and yet repeating the constant affirmative, that he *has* found it,—as if the frequent repetition, were itself a proof of what is frequently repeated,—but proving only that the various feelings of the mind agree, as might be supposed, in being *feelings* of the mind—not that they agree in being *sensations*, as that word is used by himself, and as it is, in common philosophic use, distinguished from the other more general term. Except the mere frequency of the affirmation, and the unquestionable priority in order of time, of our sensations to our other feelings,—there is not the slightest evidence, in his system, of that universal transmutation which it affirms.

It may be necessary to mention, that, in these remarks on the system of the illustrious preceptor of the Prince of Parma, I allude, in particular, to his Treatise "*of Sensations*," which contains his more mature opinions on the subject—not to his earlier work, on *the origin of human knowledge*, in which he has not ventured on so bold a simplification ; or at least, has not expressed it in language so precise.

The great error of Condillac, as it appears to me, consists in supposing that, when he has shown the circumstance from which any effect results, he has shown this result to be essentially the same with the circumstance which produced it.

Certain sensations have ceased to exist, certain other feelings have immediately arisen ;—these new feelings are therefore *the others* under another shape. Such is the secret, but very false logic, which seems to pervade his whole doctrine on the subject.

The origin of this false reasoning, I conceive to be the *analogy of matter*, to which his system, by reducing *all* the affections of mind to that class which is immediately connected with external things, must have led him to pay peculiar attention. Yet, in justice to him, I must remark, that, although a system which reduces every feeling to mere sensation, and consequently connects every feeling, in its origin, with the qualities of matter, must be favourable to materialism, and has unquestionably fostered this, in a very high degree, in the French school of metaphysics, there is no reason to consider Condillac himself as a materialist ; on the contrary, his works contain many very just remarks on the errors of materialism. But still his system, by leading him continually to our organs of sense, and to the objects which act upon them, must have rendered the phenomena of matter peculiarly apt to recur to his mind in all its speculations. Now, in *matter*, there can be no question as to the reality of that transmutation, which, as applied to mind, forms the chief principle of his intellectual analysis. In the chemistry of the material elements, the compounds are the very elements themselves. When any two substances present together, vanish as it were from our view, and a third substance, whether like or unlike to either of the former, presents itself in their place, we believe this third substance, however dissimilar it may appear, to be only the co-existence of the two others ; and indeed, since we have no reason to believe that any change takes place in the number of the corpuscles of which our planet is composed, the whole series of its corpuscular changes can be only new combinations of particles that existed before.

With respect to the mere elements of matter, therefore, the *present* may be said, and truly said, to be exactly the *past*; and, in the whole series of phenomena of the material universe, from the moment of its creation, to this present moment, there has been nothing new, but mere changes of relative position. This absolute sameness of result, in all the apparent changes of matter, Condillac applies, by a most unwarrantable extension, to the mere affections of the mind; and, because two affections of mind are followed by a third, he considers the *third* to be the two former *co-existing*, or, as he terms it, *transformed*. The feeling which follows another feeling, however seemingly different, is thus, in his system, the same, because it results from it; and it is very easy for him, in this way, to prove *all* our feelings to be *sensations*, by the simplest of arguments, that sensation was the first state induced in mind, and that hence, since all our other feelings, of every species, must have followed it, they must have originated in it, and therefore been this very sensation under a mere change of form. It is number one of the long series; and, if number two be a transformed sensation, because it results from number one, which was a sensation, number three must be equally so because it follows number two; and thus, successively, the whole series. I perceive a hare; I perceive a sheep;—each of these separate states of my mind is a sensation. I cannot attend to them long, he says, without comparing them, and perceiving those circumstances of agreement, which lead me to apply to both the word quadruped. All this is most indubitably true. It is impossible, or at least, it is not very common for us to observe any two animals long, together, without thinking of some of the circumstances in which they agree or differ. The one state of mind is a consequence of the other state of mind. But this is far from proving the comparison itself, as a subsequent state or phenomenon of the mind, to be the same mental state as the mere perception of the two animals which simply preceded it. If the evidence of our consciousness is to be trusted, it is very different; and in what other evidence can the assertion of their sameness be founded? We do not feel the state of mind, which constitutes the comparison, to be virtually equal to the two states of mind which constituted the separate perception, as we feel the relation of virtual equality between our notion of the number eight, and our notions of six and two combined; the one feeling does not *virtually* comprehend the two others, and it surely does not comprehend them in any grosser physical sense; for there certainly is nothing in the absolute spiritual unity of our thinking principle, which can lead us to

believe that the state or affection of mind which constitutes the perception of a horse, and the state or affection of mind which constitutes the perception of a sheep, unite, in that different state or affection of mind, which constitutes the comparison of the two, in the same manner as the solid crystals of any salt unite, in solution, with the liquid which dissolves them. They do not *involve* or *constitute*, they merely give *occasion* to this third state, and give occasion to it, merely in consequence of the peculiar susceptibilities of the mind itself, as formed, by its divine Author, to be affected in this particular manner, after being affected in those different manners, which constitute the separate perceptions, as sensation itself, the primary feeling, was made to depend on some previous organic affection produced by an external object. It is not, therefore, as being susceptible of *mere sensation*, but as being susceptible of more than mere sensation, that the mind is able to compare its sensations with each other. We may see, and certainly do see, objects together, without forming uniformly the same comparison; which could not be the case if the mere co-existence of the two perceptions constituted or involved the comparison itself. In the case of a horse and a sheep, for example, though these, in the sensations which they excite, cannot, at different times, be very different, we compare, at different times, their colour, their forms, their magnitudes, their functions, and the uses to which we put them, and we consider them as related in various other ways. The perceptions being the same, the comparisons, or subsequent feelings of relation, are different; and though the relation cannot be felt but when both objects are considered together, it is truly no part of the perception of each. According to the French system, the science, which we now strangely regard as of difficult acquirement, would be nothing more than the mere opening of our eyes. Were we to show to a peasant, absolutely unacquainted with the very elements of geometry, diagrams representing two right angles, and a plane triangle, he might certainly, though he could not give them names, perceive these figures as clearly as the most expert mathematician. Every thing which mere sensation could produce, in this case, would be the same in both; and nothing can be added to this primary sensation, since every thing is said to be actually involved in the sensation itself. Yet, with all his accurate perception of the figures, however clear, and vivid, and lasting, the peasant would not find, in this immediate perception, the equality of the two right angles, taken together, to the three angles of the triangle, or any other geometrical relation. The comparison, then, and the

belief of an universal truth of proportion, which results from that comparison, are certainly something more than the mere sensation itself. They are, in short, new states of mind, as distinct from the mere perception of the figures in the diagram, as the perception of a circle itself differs from the perception of a square.

The very celebrated system which I have now been combating, may be regarded as exemplifying one species of error in arrangement,—the error of a simplification beyond what the phenomena allow. This species of error, in the philosophy of mind, has not prevailed very generally in our country,—by far the more general tendency, especially on this part of the island, being to excessive amplification. Instead of wasting the labour of our analysis on elements that do not admit of any further decomposition, we have given up this labour too soon, and have classed, in many cases, as ultimate principles, what appear to me to be susceptible of still nicer analysis.

While I am far from conceiving, therefore, with Condillac and his followers, that all our states of mind are mere sensations modified or transformed, I am equally unwilling to admit the variety of powers, of which Dr. Reid speaks. In one sense, indeed, the susceptibilities, or powers, which the mind possesses, may be said, with propriety, to be still more numerous,—as numerous as its feelings themselves,—for it must never be forgotten, that what we term classes, are only words of our own invention,—that the feelings which we arrange as belonging to one class, are truly different in themselves, precisely in the same manner as the feelings arranged in different classes are reciprocally different,—that each feeling is, and must be, indicative of a peculiar susceptibility of being affected in that particular manner,—and that the mind has, therefore, truly as many susceptibilities, as, in various circumstances, it can have different feelings. But still, when we arrange these different phenomena in certain classes, it is an error in classification to give a new name to varieties that can be referred to other parts of the division already made; and it is on this account I object to the unnecessary amplification of our intellectual systems, in arranging the phenomena of mind under so many powers as those of which we are accustomed to speak.

Our various states or affections of the mind, I have already divided into two classes, according to the nature of the circumstances which precede them,—the *External* and the *Internal*,—and this latter class into two orders,—our *Intellectual States of Mind*, and our *Emotions*. It is with the intellectual phenomena that we are at present concerned;

and this order I would arrange under two generic capacities, that appear to me to comprehend or exhaust the phenomena of the order. The whole order, as composed of feelings which arise immediately, in consequence of certain former feelings of the mind, may be technically termed, in reference to these feelings which have induced them, *Suggestions*; but, in the suggested feelings themselves, there is one striking difference. If we analyze our trains of intellectual thought exclusively of the *Emotions* which may co-exist or mingle with them, and of sensations that may be accidentally excited by external objects, we shall find them to be composed of two very distinct sets of feelings,—one set of which are mere *conceptions* or images of the past, that rise, image after image in regular sequence, but simply in succession, without any feeling of relation necessarily involved,—while the perceptions of *relation*, in the various objects of our thought, form another set of feelings, of course as various as the relations perceived. *Conceptions* and *relations*,—it is with these, and with these alone, that we are intellectually conversant. There is thus an evident ground for the arrangement of the internal suggestions, that form our trains of thought, under two heads, according as the feeling excited directly by some former feeling, may be either a simple conception, in its turn, perhaps, giving place to some other conception as transient; or may be, the feeling of a relation which two or more objects of our thought are considered by us as bearing to each other. There is, in short, in the mind, a capacity of *association*; or, as for reasons afterwards to be stated, I would rather term it,—the capacity of *Simple Suggestion*,—by which feelings formerly existing, are revived, in consequence of the mere existence of other feelings, as there is also a capacity of feeling resemblance, difference, proportion, or relation in general, when two or more external objects, or two or more feelings of the mind itself, are considered by us,—which mental capacity, in distinction from the former, I would term the capacity of *Relative Suggestion*; and of these simple and relative suggestions, the whole of our intellectual trains of thought are composed. As I am no lover of new phrases, when the old can be used without danger of mistake, I would very willingly substitute for the phrase, *relative suggestion*, the term *comparison*, which is more familiar, and expresses very nearly the same meaning. But comparison, though it involve the feeling of relation, seems also to imply a voluntary seeking for some relation, which is far from necessary to the mere internal suggestion or feeling of the relation itself. The resemblance of two objects strikes me, indeed, when I am studiously

comparing them ; but it strikes me also, with not less force, on many other occasions, when I had not previously been forming the slightest intentional comparison. I prefer, therefore, a term which is applicable alike to both cases, when a relation is sought, and when it occurs, without any search or desire of finding it.

The term *judgment*, in its strict philosophic sense, as the mere perception of relation, is more exactly synonymous with the phrase which I have employed, and might have been substituted with safety, if the vulgar use of the term, in many vague significations, had not given some degree of indistinctness even to the philosophical use of it. I may remark, too, that in our works of logic and intellectual physiology, *judgment* and *reasoning* are usually discussed separately, as if there were some essential difference of their nature ; and, therefore, since I include them both, in the relative suggestions of which I shall afterwards have to treat, it seems advisable, not to employ for the whole, a name which is already appropriated, and very generally limited, to a part. As the rise in the mind of the feeling of relation, from the mere perception or conception of objects, is however, what I mean to denote by the phrase *Relative Suggestion* ; and as *judgment*, in its strictest sense, is nothing more than this feeling of relation,—or any two or more objects, considered by us together,—I shall make no scruple to use the shorter and more familiar term, as synonymous when there can be no danger of its being misunderstood.

The intellectual states of the mind, then, to give a brief illustration of my division, I consider as all referable to two generic susceptibilities,—those of *Simple Suggestion* and *Relative Suggestion*. Our perception or conception of one object excites, of itself, and without any known cause, external to the mind, the conception of some other object, as when the mere sound of our friend's name, suggests to us the conception of our friend himself,—in which case, the conception of our friend, which follows the perception of the sound, involves no feeling of any common property with the sound which excites it, but is precisely the same state of mind, which might have been induced, by various other previous circumstances, by the sight of the chair on which he sat,—of the book which he read to us,—of the landscape which he painted. This is *Simple Suggestion*.

But, together with this capacity of Simple Suggestion, by which conception after conception arises in the mind,—precisely in the same manner, and in the same state, as each might have formed a part of other trains, and in which the particular state of mind that arises by

suggestion does not necessarily involve any consideration of the state of mind which preceded it,—there is a suggestion of a very different sort, which in every case involves the consideration, not of one phenomenon of mind, but of two or more phenomena, and which constitutes the feeling of agreement, disagreement, or relation of some sort. I perceive, for example, a horse and a sheep at the same moment. The perception of the two is followed by that different state of mind which constitutes the feeling of their agreement in certain respects, or of their disagreement in certain other respects. I think of the square of the hypotenuse of a right-angled triangle, and of the squares of the two other sides ;—I feel the relation of equality. I see a dramatic representation ; I listen to the cold conceits which the author of the tragedy, in his omnipotent command over warriors and lovers of his own creation, gives to his hero, in his most impassioned situations ;—I am instantly struck with their unsuitableness to the character and the circumstances. All the intellectual successions of feeling, in these cases, which constitute the perception of relation, differ from the results of simple suggestion in necessarily involving the consideration of two or more objects or affections of mind, that immediately preceded them. I may think of my friend, in the case of simple suggestion,—that is to say, my mind may exist in the state which constitutes the conception of my friend, without that previous state which constitutes the perception of the sound of his name ; for the conception of him may be suggested by various objects and remembrances. But I cannot in the cases of relative suggestion, think of the resemblance of a horse and a sheep ; of the proportion of the squares of the sides of a right-angled triangle ; or of the want of the truth of nature in the expressions of a dramatic hero, without those previous states of mind, which constitute the conceptions of a horse and a sheep—of the sides of the triangle,—or of the language of the warrior or lover, and the circumstances of triumph, or hope, or despair, in which he is exhibited to us by the creative artist.

With these two capacities of suggested feelings, simple and relative, which are all that truly belong to the class of intellectual states of the mind,—various *emotions* may concur, particularly that most general of all emotions, the emotion of desire, in some one or other of its various forms. According as this desire does or does not concur with them, the intellectual states themselves appear to be different ; and, by those who do not make the necessary analysis, are supposed, therefore, to be indicative of different powers. By simple suggestion, the images



of things, persons, events, pass in strange and rapid succession ; and a variety of names, expressive of different powers,—conception, association, memory,—have been given to this one simple law of our intellectual nature. But, when we *wish* to remember some object ; that is to say, when we wish our mind to be affected in that particular manner, which constitutes the conception of a particular thing, or person, or event,—or when we wish to combine new images, in some picture of fancy, this co-existence of desire, with the simple course of suggestion, which continues still to follow its own laws, as much as when no desire existed with it,—seems to render the suggestion itself different ; and recollection, and imagination, or fancy, which are truly, as we shall afterwards find, nothing more than the union of the suggested conceptions with certain specific permanent desires, are to us, as it were, distinct additional powers of our mind, and are so arranged in the systems of philosophers, who have not made the very simple analysis, which alone seems to be necessary for a more precise arrangement.

In like manner, those suggestions of another class, which constitute our notions of proportion, resemblance, difference, and all the variety of relations, may arise, when we have had no previous desire of tracing the relations, or may arise after that previous desire. But, when the feelings of relation seem to us to arise spontaneously, they are not in themselves different from the feelings of relation, that arise, in our intentional comparisons or judgments, in the longest series of ratiocination. Of such ratiocination, they are truly the most important elements. The permanent desire of discovering something unknown, or of establishing, or confuting, or illustrating, some point of belief or conjecture, may co-exist, indeed, with the continued series of relations that are felt, but does not alter the nature of that law, by which these judgments, or relative suggestions, succeed each other.

There is no power to be found, but only the union of certain intellectual states of the mind, with certain desires,—a species of combination not more wonderful in itself, than any other complex mental state, as when we, at the same moment, see and smell a rose,—or listen to the voice of a friend, who has been long absent from us, and see, at the same moment, that face of affection, which is again giving confidence to our heart, and gladness to our very eyes.

Our intellectual states of mind, then, are either those resemblances of past affections of the mind, which arise by *simple* suggestion, or those feelings of relation, which arise by what I have termed *re-*

five suggestions,—the one set resulting, indeed, from some prior states of the mind, but not involving, necessarily, any consideration of these previous states of mind, which suggested them,—the other set, necessarily involving the consideration of two or more objects, or two or more affections of mind, as subjects of the relation which is felt.

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## CHAPTER II.

### OF SIMPLE SUGGESTION.—MR. HUME'S CLASSIFICATION OF ASSOCIATING PRINCIPLES.

THE intellectual phenomena which we are, in the first place, to consider, are those of Simple Suggestion, which are usually classed under the general term of the *Association of Ideas*,—a term employed to denote that tendency of the mind, by which feelings, that were formerly excited by an external cause, arise afterwards, in regular successions to each other, as it were spontaneously, or at least without the immediate presence of any known external cause. The limitation of the term, however, to those states of mind, which are exclusively denominated *ideas*, has, I conceive, tended greatly to obscure the subject, or at least to deprive us of the aid which we might have received from it in the analysis of many of the most complex phenomena. The influence of the associating principle itself extends, not to ideas only, but to every species of affection of which the mind is susceptible. Our internal joys, sorrows, and all the variety of our emotions, are capable of being revived in a certain degree by the mere influence of this principle, and of blending with the ideas or other feelings which awakened them, in the same manner as our conceptions of external things. These last, however, it must be admitted, present the most striking and obvious examples of the influence of the principle, and are, therefore, the fittest for illustrating it. The faint and shadowy elements of past emotions, as mingling in any present feeling, it may not be easy to distinguish; but our remembrances of things without are clear and definite, and are easily recognised by us as images of the past. We have seen, in the history of our senses, by what admirable means Nature has provided for communicating to man those first rude elements of knowledge, which are afterwards to be the materials of his

sublimest speculations,—and with what still more admirable goodness she has ministered to his pleasure in these primary elements of thought, and in the very provision which she has formed for the subsistence of his animal frame,—making the organs by which he becomes acquainted with the properties of external things, not the fountain of knowledge only, but an ever-mingling source of enjoyment and instruction.

It is through the medium of perception, as we have seen,—that is to say, through the medium of those *sensitive capacities* already so fully considered by us,—that we acquire our knowledge of the properties of external things. But if our knowledge of these properties were limited to the moment of perception, and were extinguished forever with the fading sensation from which it sprang, the acquisition of this fugitive knowledge would be of little value. We should still, indeed, be sensible of the momentary pleasure or pain; but all experience of the past, and all that confidence in the regular successions of future events, which flows from experience of the past, would of course be excluded by universal and instant forgetfulness. In such circumstances, if the common wants of our animal nature remained, it is evident, that even life itself, in its worst and most miserable state, could not be supported; since, though oppressed with thirst and hunger, and within reach of the most delicious fruits and the most plentiful spring-water, we should still suffer, without any knowledge of the means by which the suffering could be remedied. Even if, by some provision of Nature, our bodily constitution had been so framed, as to require no supply of subsistence, or if, instinctively and without reflection, we had been led, on the first impulse of appetite, to repair our daily waste, and to shelter ourselves from the various causes of physical injury to which we are exposed, though our animal life might then have continued to be extended to as long a period as at present, still, if but a succession of momentary sensations, it would have been one of the lowest forms of mere animal life. It is only as capable of looking before and behind,—that is to say, as capable of those spontaneous suggestions of thought which constitute *remembrance* and *foresight*,—that we rise to the dignity of intellectual being, and that man can be said to be the image of that *Parent* of Intellests, who looks backward and forward, in a single glance, not on a few years only, but on all the ages of eternity. Without any remembrance of pleasures formerly enjoyed, or of sorrows long, past and long endured,—looking on the persons and scenes which had surrounded us from the first moment of our birth, as if they were

objects altogether unknown to us,—incapable even of as much reasoning as still gleams through the dreadful stupor of the maniac,—or of conveying even that faint expression of thought with which the rudest savages, in the rudest language, are still able to hold some communication of their passions or designs;—such, but for that capacity which we are considering, would have been the deplorable picture of the whole human race. What is now revered by us as the most generous and heroic virtue, or the most profound and penetrating genius, would have been nothing more than this wretchedness and imbecility. It is *the suggesting principle*, the reviver of thoughts and feelings which have passed away, that gives value to all our other powers and susceptibilities, intellectual and moral—not indeed, by producing them, for, though unevolved, they would still, as latent capacities, be a part of the original constitution of our spiritual nature,—but by rousing them into action, and furnishing them with those accumulating and inexhaustible materials, which are to be the elements of future thought, and the objects of future emotion. Every talent by which we excel, and every vivid feeling which animates us, derive their energy from the suggestions of this ever-active principle. We love and hate,—we desire and fear,—we use means for obtaining good, and avoiding evil,—because we remember the objects and occurrences which we have formerly observed, and because the future, in the similarity of the successions which it presents, appears to us only a prolongation of the past.

The future memory of perception seems to us almost implied in perception itself; and to speculate on that strange state of existence which would have been the condition of man, if he had been formed without the power of remembrance, and capable only of a series of sensations, has at first an appearance almost of absurdity and contradiction, as if we were imagining conditions which were in their nature incompatible. Yet, assuredly, if it were possible for us to consider such a subject *a priori*, the real cause of wonder would appear to be, not in the *absence* of the suggestions of memory, as in the case imagined, but in that remembrance of which we have the happy experience. When a feeling, of the existence of which, consciousness furnishes the only evidence, has passed away so completely, that not even the slightest consciousness of it remains, it would surely,—but for that experience,—be more natural to suppose that it had perished altogether, than that it should, at the distance of many years, without any renewal of it by the external cause which originally produced it, again start, as it were of itself, into being. To foresee that which has not yet begun to exist,

is, in itself, scarcely more unaccountable, than to see as it were before us, what has wholly ceased to exist. The present moment is all of which we are conscious, and which can strictly be said to have a real existence, in relation to ourselves. That mode of time, which we call the *past*, and that other mode of time, which we call the *future*, are both equally unexisting. That the knowledge of either should be added to us, so as to form a part of our present consciousness, is a gift of Heaven, most beneficial to us indeed, but most mysterious, and equally, or nearly equally mysterious, whether the unexisting time, of which the knowledge is indulged to us, be the future or the past.

The advantage which we derive from the principle of suggestion, it must, however, be remarked, consists, not in its mere revival of thoughts and feelings, of which we had before been conscious, but in its revival of these in a certain order. If past objects and events had been suggested to us again, not in that series, in which they had formerly occurred, nor according to any of those relations which human discernment has been able to discover among them, but in endless confusion and irregularity, the knowledge thus acquired, however gratifying as a source of mere variety of feeling, would avail us little, or rather would be wholly profitless, not merely in our speculative inquiries as philosophers, but in the simplest actions of common life. It is quite evident, that, in this case, we should be altogether unable to turn our experience to account, as a mode of avoiding future evil or obtaining future good; because for this application of our knowledge, it would be requisite that events, before observed, should occur to us, at the time, when similar events might be expected. We refrain from tasting the poisonous berry, which we have known to be the occasion of death to him who tasted it; because the mere *sight* of it brings again before us the fatal event, which we have heard or witnessed. We satisfy our appetite with a salutary fruit, without the slightest apprehension; because its familiar appearance recalls to us the refreshment, which we have repeatedly received. But, if these suggestions were reversed,—if the agreeable images of health and refreshment were all that were suggested by the poisonous plant, and pain, and convulsions, and death, were the only images suggested by the sight of the grateful and nourishing fruit, there can be no doubt to which of the two, our unfortunate preference would be given. To take the most familiar of all instances,—that of language,—which either as written or spoken, is in such constant use, and which is so essential, not merely to our first advance from absolute barbarism, but to the common domestic necessities, even

of barbarous life, that without it, we can scarcely conceive two individuals, however rude, to exist together,—this, it is evident, could not have been invented,—nor, if invented, could it serve any other purpose than to mislead,—if the words spoken were to have no greater chance of suggesting the meaning intended by the speaker, than any other meaning, which any other words of the language might be employed to denote. What social affection could continue for an hour, if the sight of a friend were to suggest, in intimate combination, not the kindnesses which he had conferred, and all the enjoyments of which he had been the source, but the malice, and envy, and revenge of some jealous and disappointed enemy?

He who has given us, in one simple principle, the power of reviving the past, has not made his gift so unavailing. The feelings, which this wonderful principle preserves and restores, arise, not loosely and confusedly, but according to general laws or tendencies of succession, contrived with the most admirable adaptation to our wants so as to bring again before us the knowledge formerly acquired by us, at the very time when it is most profitable that it should return. It is on the skilful management of the laws which regulate our trains of thought, the whole theory and practice of *education* are founded; that art, which is the noblest of all the arts of man—itself the animating spirit of every other art—which exerts its own immediate operation, not on lifeless things, but on the affections and faculties of the soul itself, and which has raised us from the dust, where we slept or trembled, in sluggish yet ferocious ignorance, the victims of each other, and of every element around us, to be the sharers and diffusers of the blessings of social polity, the measurers of the earth and of the skies, and the rational worshippers of that eternal Being by whom they and we were created.

What then are the general circumstances which regulate the successions of our ideas?

That there is some regularity in these successions, must have been felt by every one; and there are many references to such regularity in the works of philosophers of every age. The most striking ancient reference, however, to any general circumstances, or *laws* of suggestion, —though the enumeration of these is hinted, rather than developed at any length,—is that quoted by Dr. Beattie and Mr. Stewart, from Aristotle. It is a passage explanatory of the process by which, in voluntary reminiscence, we endeavour to discover the idea of which we are in search. We are said to *hunt* for it among other ideas, *either*

*of objects existing at present, or at some former time ; and from their resemblance, contrariety, and contiguity.* This brief enumeration of the general circumstances which direct us in reminiscence is worthy of our attention on its own account ; and is not less remarkable on account of the very close resemblance which it bears to the arrangement afterwards made by Mr. Hume, though there is no reason to believe that the modern philosopher was at all acquainted with the classification which had, at so great a distance of time, anticipated his own.

As it is, to Mr. Hume's arrangement the philosophers of our own country are accustomed to refer, in treating of association, the importance thus attached to it, gives it a preferable claim to fuller discussion. It is stated by him briefly in two paragraphs of his *Essay on the Association of Ideas*.

"Though it be too obvious to escape observation," he says, "that different ideas are connected together, I do not find that any philosopher has attempted to enumerate or class all the principles of association ; a subject, however, that seems worthy of curiosity. To me there appear to be only three principles of connexion among ideas, viz. *resemblance, contiguity in time or place, and cause or effect.*

"That these principles serve to connect ideas, will not, I believe, be much doubted. A picture naturally leads our thoughts to the original. The mention of one apartment in a building naturally introduces an inquiry or discourse concerning the others. And if we think of a wound, we can scarcely forbear reflecting on the pain which follows it. But that the enumeration is complete, and that there are no other principles of association except these, may be difficult to prove to the satisfaction of the reader, or even to a man's own satisfaction. All we can do, in such cases, is to run over several instances, and examine carefully the principle which binds the different thoughts to each other,—never stopping, till we render the principle as general as possible. The more instances we examine, and the more care we employ, the more assurance shall we acquire, that the enumeration which we form from the whole is complete and entire." \*

After stating, that there appear to him to be only the three principles of connexion already mentioned, Mr. Hume adds, in a note,—as an instance of other connexions apparently different from these three, which may, notwithstanding, be reduced to them,—

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\* Hume's Inquiry concerning Human Understanding, Sect. III.

"*Contrast*, or *contrariety*, also, is a species of connexion among ideas. But it may perhaps be considered as a mixture of causation and resemblance. Where two objects are contrary, the one destroys the other, i. e. is the cause of its annihilation, and the idea of the annihilation of an object implies the idea of its former existence."

When we hear or read for the first time this little theory of the suggestions of contrast, there is, perhaps no one who does not feel some difficulty in believing it to be a genuine speculation of that powerful mind which produced it. Contrast, says Mr. Hume, is a mixture of *causation* and *resemblance*. An object, when contrasted with another, destroys it. In destruction there is causation; and we cannot conceive destruction, without having the idea of former existence. Thus, to take an instance,—Mr. Hume does not deny, that the idea of a *dwarf* may suggest, by contrast, the idea of a *giant*; but he says that the idea of a dwarf suggests the idea of a giant, because the idea of a dwarf *destroys* the idea of a giant, and thus, by the connecting principle of causation involved in all destruction, may suggest the idea destroyed; and he adds, as an additional reason for the suggestion, that the idea of the annihilation of a giant implies the idea of the former existence of a giant. And all this strange and complicated analysis,—this explanation, not of the *obscurum per obscurius*, which is a much more intelligible paralogism, but of the *lucidum per obscurum*, is seriously brought forward by its very acute author, as illustrating the simple and familiar fact of the suggestion of opposites, in contrast, by opposites.

In the first place, I may remark, that in Mr. Hume's view of contrast, it is not easy to discover what the resemblance is of which he speaks, in a case in which the objects in themselves are said by him to be so contrary, that the one absolutely destroys the other by this *contrariety* alone; and, indeed, if there be truly this mixed resemblance in contrast, what need is there of having recourse to annihilation or causation at all, to account for the suggestion, since the resemblance alone in this, as in every other case, might be sufficient to explain the suggestion, without the necessity of any separate division;—as the likeness of a single feature in the countenance of a stranger, is sufficient to bring before us, in conception, the friend whom he resembles, though the resemblance be in the single feature only.

In the second place, there is no truth, if, indeed, there be any meaning whatever, in the assertion that in contrast one of the objects destroys the other; for, so far is the idea of the dwarf from destroying the idea



of the giant, that, in the actual case supposed, it is the very reason of the existence of the second idea; nay, the very supposition of a perceived contrast implies that there is no such annihilation; for both ideas must be present to the mind together, or they could not appear either similar or dissimilar, that is to say, could not be known by us as contrasted, or contrary, in any respect. It is, indeed, not very easy to conceive how a mind so acute as that of Mr. Hume, should not have discovered that grossest of all logical and physical errors, involved in his explanation, that it accounts for the existence of a feeling, by supposing it previously to exist as the *cause of itself*. If, as he says, the idea of the annihilation of an object implies the idea of its former existence—an assertion which is by no means so favourable as he thinks to his own theory—it must surely be admitted, that no annihilation can take place before the existence of that which is to be annihilated. Whether, therefore, we suppose, that the idea of the dwarf, which suggests the idea of the giant, annihilates that idea, or is itself annihilated by it, the two ideas of the dwarf and the giant must have existed, before the annihilation of either. The *suggestion*, in short, which is the difficulty, and the only difficulty to be explained, must have completely taken place *before* the principle can even be imagined to operate, on which the suggestion itself is said to depend.

To the threefold division which Mr. Hume has made, of the principles of association in the trains of our ideas, as consisting in *resemblance*, *contiguity*, and *causation*, there is an obvious objection, not founded on its excessive simplicity, but on its redundancy, according to the very principles of his own theory. *Causation*, far from being opposed to *contiguity*, so as to form a separate class, is, in truth, the most exquisite species of proximity in time,—and in most cases of contiguity in place also,—which could be adduced; because it is not a proximity depending on casual circumstances, and consequently liable to be broken, as these circumstances may exist apart,—but one which depends only on the mere existence of the two objects that are related to each other as cause and effect,—and therefore fixed and never failing. Other objects may sometimes be proximate; but a cause and effect are always proximate, and must be proximate, and are, indeed, classed in that relation, merely from their constant proximity. On his own principles, therefore, the three connexions of our ideas should indisputably be reduced to two.

Resemblance, and contiguity in place and time, may be allowed, indeed, to hold a permanent rank, in whatever classification there may be formed, if any be to be formed, of the principles that regulate our trains of thought. But are there, in this case, truly distinct classes of suggestions, that are not reducible to any more common principle? or are they not all reducible to a single influence? I have already remarked the error, into which the common phrase, *Association of ideas*, has led us, by restricting, in our conception, the influence of the suggesting principle to those particular states of the mind, which are exclusively denominated ideas; and it is this false restriction, which seems to me to have led to this supposition of different principles of association, to be classed in the manner proposed by Mr. Hume and others, under distinct heads. All suggestion, as I conceive, may, if our analysis be sufficiently minute, be found to depend on prior co-existence, or, at least, on such immediate proximity as is itself, very probably, a modification of co-existence. For this very nice reduction, however, we must take in the influence of emotions, and other feelings, that are very different from ideas; as when an analogous object suggests an analogous object by the influence of an emotion or sentiment, which each separately may have produced before, and which is therefore common to both. But, though a very nice analysis may lead to this reference of all our suggestions to one common influence of former proximity or co-existence of feelings, it is very convenient, in illustration of the principle, to avail ourselves of the most striking subdivisions, in which the particular instances of that proximity may be arranged; and I shall therefore adopt for this purpose, the arrangement which Mr. Hume has made,—if *resemblance* be allowed to comprehend every species of analogy, and if *contrast*, as a peculiar subdivision, be substituted for the superfluous one of causation. The illustrations which I shall use, will be chiefly rhetorical, because these are, in truth, the most striking and beautiful illustrations, and because it may be of use to lead the attention more particularly to the great principles of human nature, as in their relation to human emotions and human judgments, the standard of all just criticism.

## CHAPTER III.

PRIMARY LAWS OF SUGGESTION. I. RESEMBLANCE. II. CONTRAST.  
III. NEARNESS OF TIME AND PLACE.

To begin then with *resemblance*, no one can be ignorant of the effect of strong similarity, in recalling objects, as when a pictured landscape recalls a familiar scene, or a portrait a familiar countenance. There are many cases of this kind, indeed, which, strictly speaking, cannot be said to be instances of suggestion, from resemblance, but to be reducible to the simple laws of perception, or, at least, to associations which may be considered almost as involved in every repeated perception of the same object; for if a portrait be faithfully painted, the effect which it produces on the eye that perceives it, is the same, or very nearly the same, as the effect produced on the eye by similar light reflected from the living object; and we might, therefore, almost as justly say, that when any individual is seen by us repeatedly, he suggests himself by resemblance, as that he is thus suggested by his portrait.

In many other cases, in which the resemblance is less complete, its operation may, even without such refinement of analysis, as that to which I have alluded, be very obviously brought under the influence of contiguity. Thus, as the drapery forms so important a part of the complex perception of the human figure, the costume of any period may recall to us some distinguished person of that time. A ruff, like that worn by Queen Elizabeth, brings before us the sovereign herself, though the person who wears the ruff may have no other circumstance of resemblance;—because the ruff, and the general appearance of Queen Elizabeth, having formed one complex whole in our mind, it is necessary only that one part of the complexity should be recalled,—as the ruff in the case supposed,—to bring back all the other parts, by the mere principle of contiguity. The instance of drapery, which is but an adjunct or accidental circumstance of the person, may be easily extended to other instances, in which the resemblance is in parts of the real and permanent figure; for, though the drapery be only an adjunct of the person, considered separately from our perception, it is an actual component part, as much as any other component part, of that complex idea, which is formed of the person perceived. If we meet a stranger, who

in any particular feature, as in the shape and colour of his eyes, resembles one of our intimate friends, the conception of our friend is suggested; because the conception of our friend's countenance is a complex one, composed of the separate parts of forehead, eyes, cheeks, mouth, nose, chin; and the eyes of the stranger affecting our vision, in precisely the same manner as the eyes of our friend, thus produce one part of the complex whole, which we have been accustomed to recognise as our friend, and the one part, by its former proximity, recalls the others. The view of one piece of landscape brings before us in conception, a distant, and perhaps very different scene, by the influence of some small group of objects, or some detached rock, or tree, or hill, or waterfall, which produces the same impression on the eye in both. In this manner, by analyzing every complex whole, and tracing, in the variety of its composition, that particular part, in which the actual similarity consists, and which may, therefore, be supposed to introduce the other parts, that have formerly co-existed with it,—we might be able to reduce every case of suggestion from direct resemblance, to the influence of mere contiguity. But, as in many cases of faint analogical resemblance, this analysis, however just, might appear to involve too great subtilty; and, as the suggestions of resemblance, if indeed they arise, as I suppose, only from the influence of former proximity, are at least so easily distinguishable, from the grosser instances of contiguity, that they may, without any inconvenience, be considered apart,—I have thought it more advantageous for our present purpose of illustration, to consider them thus separately. By the application of a similar refined analysis, however, to other tribes of associations, even to those of contrast, we may, perhaps, find that it would be possible to reduce these also to the same comprehensive influence of mere proximity, as the single principle on which all suggestion is founded.

As yet we have taken into view only those more obvious resemblances of actual things, which produce similar impressions on our organs of sense. There is another species of resemblance, founded on more shadowy analogies, which gives rise to an innumerable series of suggestions, most important in value to our intellectual luxury, since it is to them we are, in a great measure, indebted for the most sublime of arts. To these analogies of objects, that agree in exciting similar emotions, we owe the simile, the metaphor, and, in general, all that figurative phraseology, which has almost made a separate language of poetry, as distinct from the abstract language of prose. “Poetas om-

nino, quasi alienâ linguâ locutos, non cogar attingere," says Cicero. Yet the difference of the languages of poetry and prose, is much less in Latin, than in our own tongue, in which the restriction of genders, in common discourse, to animated beings, gives, for the production of high rhetorical effect, such happy facilities of distinct personification.

The zephyrs *laugh*,—the sky *smiles*,—the forest *frowns*,—the storm and the surge *contend together*,—the solitary place not merely blossoms like the rose, but it is *glad*.

All nature becomes animated. The poetic genius, like that soul of the world, by which the early philosophers accounted for all earthly changes, breathes its own spirit into every thing surrounding it.

It is the *metaphor* which forms the essence of the language of poetry ; and it is to that peculiar mode of association which we are now considering,—the suggestion of objects by their analogous objects,—that the metaphor owes its birth,—whether the analogy be derived from the moral to the physical, or from the physical to the moral world. The *metaphor* expresses with rapidity the analogy, as it rises in immediate suggestion, and identifies it, as it were, with the object or emotion which it describes ; the *simile* presents, not the analogy merely, but the two analogous objects, and traces their resemblance to each other with the formality of regular comparison. The metaphor, therefore, is the figure of passion ; the simile, the figure of calm description. In the drama, accordingly, as the most faithful poetic representation of passion, the simile should be of rare occurrence, and never but in situations in which the speaker may be considered as partaking almost the tranquillity of the poet himself. Thus, to take a well-known instance of error in this respect, when Portius, in the tragedy of Cato, at the very moment in which Lucia, whom he loves, has just bid him farewell forever, and when he is struggling to detain her, traces all the resemblances of his passion to the flame of a fading lamp, we feel immediately, that a lover who could so fully develope a comparison, and a comparison, too, derived from an object the least likely to occur to him at such a moment, could not be suffering any very great agony of heart.

"Farewell," says Lucia ;

"O, how shall I repeat the word—forever !"

To which Portius, hanging over her in despair, immediately replies,—

"Thus o'er the dying lamp, the unsteady flame  
Hangs quivering on a point, leaps off by fits,

And falls again as loth to quit its hold.  
 Thou must not go ; my soul still hovers o'er thee,  
 And can't get loose." \*

The speech, it may be remarked, by combining a simile and metaphor, in the compass of a very few lines, presents at once a specimen of a figure which suits, and a figure which is altogether inconsistent with a state of passion. If the three lines which describe the flame of a lamp had been omitted, and only the conclusion retained,—

"Thou must not go ! My soul still hovers o'er thee,  
 And can't get loose,"—

there would still have been an analogy borrowed from a remote object, but an analogy *implied* not *developed*, and expressed with the rapidity with which such analogies really arise.

It may perhaps be thought, that even the analogy implied in a metaphor, as it is borrowed from objects not immediately present, and not essential to the emotion, is inconsistent with the natural direction of the suggesting principle in a state of violent feeling. But it is the nature of strong feelings to give to the whole character, for the time, a greater elevation, which enables it to comprehend, as it were, within its vision, a greater multitude of kindred objects than can be grasped by it in its unimpassioned state, and to diffuse itself over them all, as if they were living and sympathizing parts of itself. If we attend to what occurs in real life, we shall find, that the metaphor, far from being unnatural, is almost a necessary part of the language of emotion, and that it is then that the language of prose makes its nearest approach to the language of poetry. Indeed, as poetry seems to have originated in the expression of lively feeling, it would have been truly singular if its language had been the least suited to the state in which such feelings are expressed.

The *simile* is a figure of more deliberate reflection than the metaphor ; yet, notwithstanding the intellectual labour which it seems to imply, it is evident, that, in the pleasure which we receive from it, we still have in view its source in the general principle of spontaneous suggestion. It is not every simile, therefore, however just, that pleases ; but such only, that seem to be derived from objects that might naturally be expected to occur to the mind in the situation in which the comparison is made. We talk of far-fetched similes, not as im-

plying that there is no real analogy in the objects which they compare, or that the analogy is not as complete as in many other comparisons to which we do not give that name, but merely, because the analogy is sought in objects, the natural occurrence of which to the mind does not seem very probable. We are more pleased, in general, with comparisons derived from the works of nature, than with those which are borrowed from the works of art; partly, because natural objects are not limited to a particular class of observers, but may be supposed to have been present to the senses of all in every period of their life, and, therefore, to be of more ready and general occurrence in suggestion,—and partly, because with works of human art there is associated a degree of minute labour, which is not favourable to conceptions of beauty and sublimity, and which carries with it the feeling of toil and artificial preparation into all the groups of images with which it is combined. In exactness of analogy,—and this, too, in a case in which such similitude could scarcely have been expected,—it is not easy to find a comparison more striking than that which Butler has made of *honour*, to the drop of quickly-cooled glass, which chemists have called Prince Rupert's drop, and which has long attracted their attention, in consequence of the particular quality described in the simile :

“Honour is like that glassy bubble,  
Which gives\* philosophers such trouble ;  
Whose least part crack'd, the whole does fly ;  
And wits are crack'd to find out why.” †

Yet, truly accurate as it is, how absurd would such a simile have appeared in any other species of poetry than that, of which it is a part of the province to bring far-fetched images together !

The different degrees of the pleasure received from comparisons, as they appear to harmonize more or less with the natural influence of the principle of suggestion in spontaneous trains of thought, is finely shown, in what has always appeared to me a very striking imperfection in one of the most popular stanzas of Gray's very popular *Elegy*.

“Full many a gem, of purest ray serene,  
The dark unfathom'd caves of Ocean bear;  
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,  
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.” ‡

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\* That finds, Orig.

† Part II. Canto ii. v. 385—388.

‡ V. 53—56.

The two similes in this stanza certainly produce very different degrees of poetical delight. That which is borrowed from the rose blooming in solitude pleases in a very high degree, both as it contains a just and beautiful similitude, and still more, as the similitude is one of the most likely to have arisen to a poetic mind in such a situation. But the simile in the first two lines of the stanza, though it may, perhaps, philosophically be as just, has no other charm, and strikes us immediately as not the natural suggestion of such a moment and such a scene. To a person moralizing amid the simple tombs of a village church-yard, there is perhaps no object that would not sooner have occurred than this piece of minute jewelry—a gem of purest ray serene, in the unfathomed caves of Ocean. When the analogies are suggested by surrounding objects, or by objects that harmonize with the surrounding scenery, they appear more natural, and, therefore, more pleasing. It is this which forms the principal charm of the separate stanzas of another very popular poem of a similar class, the *Hermit* of Dr. Beattie, in which the moral allusions are all caught from objects that are represented as present to the eye or ear of the moralist. I confess, however, that, when the poem is read as a whole, the uniformity of the allusions, drawn from such a variety of objects to the single circumstance of man's mortality, gives an appearance of laborious search, almost in the same manner as if the analogy had been traced from very remote objects. I select, therefore, only a single stanza from the whole :—

“Tis night, and the landscape is lovely no more.  
 I mourn, but, ye woodlands, I mourn not for you ;  
 For morn is approaching, your charms to restore,  
 Perfum'd with fresh fragrance, and glittering with dew.  
 Nor yet for the ravage of winter I mourn,  
 Kind Nature the embryo blossom will save.  
 But when shall spring visit the mouldering urn ?  
 O ! when shall it dawn on the night of the grave ?” \*

We have seen, then, what an accession to our pleasure the suggesting principle of analogy has produced, in giving birth to the figurative language of poetry ; and how necessary it is to have frequent recourse to this principle, in laying down the general laws of philosophical criticism. But there is another class of most important analogies, which we have not yet considered,—those which form the powerful associa-

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\* Stanza 4.



tions that direct the genius of scientific invention. These are the analogies of objects, considered as means, in reference to a particular end. When a mechanician sees a machine, the parts of which all concur in one great ultimate effect, if he be blessed with inventive genius, he will not merely see and comprehend the uses of the parts, as they co-operate in the particular machine before him, but there will perhaps arise in his mind the idea of some power, yet unapplied to the same purpose, some simpler process, by which the ultimate effect may be augmented, or improved, or at least obtained at less cost of time, or labour, or capital. When the crucible of the chemist presents to him some new result, and his first astonishment is over, there arise in his mind the ideas of products, or operations, in some respects analogous, by the comparison of which he discovers some new element, or combination of elements, and perhaps changes altogether the aspect of his science. A Newton sees an apple fall to the ground,—and he discovers the system of the universe. In these cases, the principle of analogy, whether its operation be direct or indirect, is too forcible, and too extensive in its sway, to admit of much dispute. It is sufficient to know, that by the suggestions which it has afforded, to those whom Heaven has formed for the high destiny of constituting a part of that series of minds, which spread from age to age the progress of improvement over all the regions and generations of mankind, we have risen to a degree of empire over nature, which, compared with our original imbecility, is a greater advance in the scale of being, than that fabulous apotheosis which the ancient world conferred on its barbarous heroes.

There is another set of resemblances, not in the objects themselves, but in the mere arbitrary signs which express them, that have a powerful, though less obvious influence on suggestion, and often guide the trains of our thought without appearing to guide them.

It is, when we consider, indeed, what language truly is, not more wonderful that words, as sounds, without regard to the sensible objects or abstract meanings denoted by them, should awaken in the mind the conception of similar sounds, than that one form or colour should be suggested by a similar form or colour ; and, so arbitrary is language, that these mere *verbal* similarities do not necessarily involve similarities of meaning. On the contrary, the words which express different objects may have the most exact resemblance, though there may not be the slightest direct resemblance, nor even the faintest analogy, in the objects, which the words denote. The new word, however, which some former word may have suggested, by its mere similarity in sound,

is itself significant of some peculiar meaning. *It*, too is a symbol, and is a symbol, cannot be thus suggested, without exciting uniformly, or almost uniformly, and immediately, the conception of the thing signified; and hence, from the accidental agreement of their mere verbal signs, conceptions arise which otherwise would not have arisen, and, consequently, trains of reflection altogether different. Our thoughts, which usually govern our language, are themselves also in a great measure governed in this way, by that very language over which they seem to exercise unlimited command; so true, in more senses than one, is the observation of Lord Bacon, "*Credunt homines rationem suam verbis imperare, sed fit etiam, ut verba vim suam super rationem retorqueant.*" \*

When a word is once suggested by its syllabic resemblance, and, consequently, the image which that new word denotes, the mind is so quick to perceive a relation of some sort among almost all the objects which can be presented to it, that it readily discovers some relation between the new image and those which preceded it; and though it was truly the resemblance of mere sound which suggested it, independently of the relation which may be discovered after it is suggested, the feeling of this relation seems of itself, when we look back, sufficient to account for the suggestion. We think of this, therefore, as the cause, since it can be made to harmonize, in some measure, with our thought itself, and disregard that mere verbal influence, in which, and in which alone, the suggestion had its origin. It is only where the direct verbal suggestion is rendered more apparent, by the strange incongruity of the images, which the similar sounds chance to denote, as in the case of puns, that we readily ascribe the suggestion to the word, and not to the thought itself. Even in the case of puns, it is only to the few, in which the contrast of meaning is very striking, that we pay any attention. How many words of similar sound arise in the mind by this species of suggestion, which are never uttered as puns, but pass silently away, because they are felt to be without that happy ambiguity, or opposition of meaning, which alone could reconcile the hearers to this petty species of wit.

Next to this petty species of wit, as a proof of the influence of mere verbal similarities of sound in suggestion, may be mentioned the connecting influence of rhyme. That, in rhyme, sound suggests sound, and consequently operates indirectly on the train of thought by this

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\* Nov. Orig. Lib. 1. aph. lix.

mere symbolical resemblance, there can be no question, since rhyme itself is but the recurrence of such similar sounds at regular or irregular intervals ; and to these recurring sounds, it is very evident that the train of thought must be in a considerable degree subservient, however independent of it, it may seem. I need not quote the simile of Butler so often quoted on this subject, in which he compares rhyme, in its influence on verse, to the rudder, which, though in the rear of the vessel, and apparently following its direction, directs the track which the vessel itself is to pursue ; but there can be no doubt as to the reality of the influence exercised on the whole verse, by these final words,—the monotonous syllables,—of which the office has been said to be nothing more than the very humble one of standing,

“like watchmen, at the close,  
To keep the verse from being prose.”

On first consideration it might seem, that, in the use of rhyme, the necessity under which the poet is placed of accommodating his train of thought to resemblances of sound that have themselves no peculiar relation to one thought more than to another, and the frequent sacrifices which may, therefore, be required of him, must be unfavourable to the sentiment of the verse, whatever accession of pleasure it may or may not be supposed to give to the melody. That it must occasionally render some sacrifices unavoidable, and thus sometimes deprive the reader of expressions more powerful than the tamer phrases, which alone admit of being accommodated to some obstinate and intractable rhyme, is indeed true. Yet the influence of this constraint is perhaps, upon the whole, far from unfavourable to the sentiment, giving more than it takes away. For how many of the most beautiful thoughts and images of poetry are we indebted to these final sounds, which suggest each other by their accidental resemblances ; and which, merely by obliging the poet to pause till he can accommodate the verse, with perfect propriety of sentiment and measure, to the imperious necessity of the rhyme, bring before him during this interval, a greater variety of images, from which to make his selection, than would have occurred to his rapid invention and too easy acquiescence, if he had not been under the same unavoidable restraint. In this respect, the shackles of rhyme have often been compared to the fetters of the actor ; which, instead of truly embarrassing his movements, and giving him less pomp and consequence in the eyes of those who gaze on him, only make him toss his arms with more impetuous action, and tread the stage with greater majesty.

An influence on the successions of our thought,—similar to that of the concluding syllables of verse,—is exercised by the initial sounds of words in *alliteration*. How readily suggestions of this kind occur, so as to modify indirectly the train of images and feelings in the mind, and what pleasure they afford when they seem to have arisen without effort, is marked by the tendency to alliteration which is so prevalent, not in the poetry merely, but still more in the traditionary proverbs of every country. In like manner, when names are to be coupled in the fictions of romance, and when many names seem equal in every other respect, this alliterative resemblance is very frequently, to use Leibnitz's phrase, the *sufficient reason* which directs the author's choice. In the works of a single novelist, for example, how much more readily do the names *Roderick Random*, *Peregrine Pickle*, *Ferdinand Count Fathom*, seem to join together, than if the same names had been differently arranged, in any transposition which we could make of them.

It is in verse, however, and particularly in the lighter species of verse, that the charm of alliteration is most powerfully felt. I scarcely need repeat any examples, to prove what must often have been experienced :—

“ But thousands die, without or this or that ;  
Die, and endow a college or a cat.” \*

“ Fill but his purse, our poet's work is done ;  
Alike to him, by pathos or by pun.” †

“ Or her whose life the church and scandal share ;  
Forever in a passion, or a prayer.” ‡

——“ Many a German Prince is worse,  
Who, proud of pedigree, is poor of purse.” §

In these lines of Pope, it is impossible not to feel the force of the alliteration, and the additional prominence and sharpness which it seems to give to every point of the thought and expression.

It may be remarked, however, that though the alliteration itself consists only in the similarity of sounds,—which must, of course, be the same, whatever be the meaning of the particular words,—it is by no means indifferent as to the effect produced, on what words of the

\* Moral Essays, Ep. III. v. 95, 96.

† Imitations of Horace, Book II. Ep. I. v. 294, 295.—“ Their purse,” and “ them.”—Orig.

‡ Moral Essays, Ep. II. v. 105, 106.

§ Imitations of Horace, Ep. VI. v. 83, 84.

sentence the alliteration is made to fall. Unless where it is intended for producing or augmenting imitative harmony by its redoubled sounds, which may be considered as forming a class apart,—it is never so powerful, as when it falls on words, which, together with the similarity of sound, have either a great similarity or a great discrepancy of meaning, harmonizing, as it were, with those other principles of resemblance or contrast, which, of themselves, might have been sufficient to produce the particular suggestion. Thus in the very alliterative line of the Rape of the Lock, which describes the furniture of Belinda's toilet,—

“Puffs, powders, patches, bibles, billets-doux ;” \*

the alliteration in the former half of the verse is of words which express things similar, that in the latter part, of words which express things discrepant. The contrast, produced by the ideas of Bibles and billets-doux, gives more pleasure, by the agreement which the alliteration points out of things that are in other respects so opposite. It is the same in the case of the *passion* and the *prayer*, the *college* and the *cat*, and in most of those happy alliterations which are to be found in the satirical or playful verses of this powerful master of all the art of verse. The alliteration of words that express opposite ideas is, in truth, a species of wit,—as far as the pleasure of wit consists in the sudden discovery of unexpected resemblances,—and approaches very nearly the nature of a pun ; combined, at the same time, with the pleasure, which the ludicrous antithesis of the objects themselves would have produced even without alliteration. To the other half of the line,—“Puffs, powders, patches,”—the same remark does not apply. Yet the pleasure, in this instance, is not produced merely by the recurrence of similar sounds. It arises also, in part, from the discovery of a new and different resemblance, in things of which all the similarities were before supposed to be known. In this, too, the effect of the alliteration is very nearly similar to that of a pun ; and it is, in truth, a pun of letters, as puns, conversely, may be said to imply an alliteration of whole words. In both cases, whether the resemblance be in the whole word, as in the pun, or only in a part of the word, as in alliteration, the suggestion may be considered as a decisive proof of the influence which is exercised over our trains of thought by the mere accident of the agreement of arbitrary sounds.

That resemblance of mere syllabic sound, which we are now considering, must appear to have its source in *spontaneous suggestion*, or

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\* Canto I. v. 138.

it ceases to give pleasure. On this account chiefly it is, that alliteration, which delights when sparingly used, becomes offensive when frequently repeated in any short series of lines ; not because any one of the reduplications of sound would itself be less pleasing if it had not been preceded by others than those others which preceded it, but because the frequent recurrence of it shows too plainly, that the alliteration has been studiously sought. The suggesting principle is not confined to one set of objects, or to a few ; and, though similarity of mere initial sound be one of the relations according to which suggestion may take place, it is far from being the most powerful or constant one. A few syllabic or literal resemblances are, therefore, what may be expected very naturally to occur, particularly in those lighter trains of thought in which there is no strong emotion to modify the suggestion, in permanent relation to one prevailing sentiment. But a series of alliterative phrases is inconsistent with the natural variety of the suggesting principle. It implies a labour of search and selection, and a labour which it is not pleasing to contemplate, because it is employed on an object too trifling to give it interest.

In the early ages of verse, indeed, when the skill that is admired must be a species of skill that requires no great refinement to discover it, this very appearance of labour is itself a charm. A never-ceasing alliteration, as it presents a difficulty of which all can readily judge, is in this period of rude discernment, an obvious mode of forcing admiration ;—very much in the same way, as the feats of a rope-dancer or a tumbler never fail to give greater pleasure to a child, and to the vulgar, who in their tastes are always children, than the most graceful attitudes of the dancer, in all his harmony of movement,—who does, perhaps, what no one else is capable of doing, but who seems to do it in a way which every one may try to imitate, and who is truly most inimitable when he seems to show how very easy it is to execute all the wonders which he performs. Accordingly we find, in the history of our own poetry, and in the poetry of many semi-barbarous nations, that frequent alliteration has been held to be a requisite of verse as indispensable as the metrical pauses on which its melody depends. With the refinement of taste, however, this passion for coarse difficulty subsides ; and we begin at last to require, not merely that difficulty should be overcome, but that the labour of overcoming the difficulty should be hid from us, with a care at least equal to that which was used in overcoming it.

We know too well the order of this spontaneous suggestion, not to feel, when this alliteration is very frequently repeated, the want of the

natural flow of thought, and consequently, the labour which must have been used in the search of sounds that were to be forced reluctantly together. There is no longer any pleasure felt, therefore; or if any pleasure be felt, it is of a kind totally different from that, which gives an additional charm to the easy flow of verse when the alliteration is sparingly used. There is a poem of some hundred lines, in regular hexameter verse,—the *Pugna Porcorum*, per Publium Porcium Poetam,—in which there is not a single word introduced that does not begin with the letter *P*. But what is the pleasure which the foolish ingenuity of such a poem affords? and who is there who could have patience sufficient to read the whole of it? I quote a few lines as a specimen.

“Propterea properans Proconsul, poplite prono,  
Præcipitem Plebem, pro patrum pace poposcit.  
Persta paulisper, pubes preciosa! precamur.  
Pensa profectum parvum pugnae peragenda.” \*

This, it is evident, is the very vaulting, and tumbling, and rope-dancing of poetry; and any coarse pleasure which we may receive from it, when we hear or read a part of it for the first time, is not the pleasure of verse, but a pleasure, which the wise, indeed, may feel, but which is very much akin to the mere clownish wonderment that fixes the whole village, in the rural fair, around the stage of some itinerant tumbler or fire-eater.

## SECTION II.—*Contrast.*

After these remarks, on the influence of the various species of resemblance,—in the objects themselves,—in the analogy of some of their qualities,—and in the arbitrary symbols, which denote them,—I proceed to consider the force of *contrast*, as a suggesting principle. I consider it, at present, as forming a class apart, for the same reason, which has led me, in these illustrations of the general principle, to class separately the suggestions of resemblance, though I conceive that all, or at least the greater number of them, on a more subtle analysis, might be reduced to the more comprehensive influence of former proximity.

Of this influence, whether direct or indirect, in contrast, the memory of every one must present him with innumerable instances. The

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\* V. 41—44.

*palace* and the *cottage*,—the *cradle* and the *grave*,—the extremes of *indigence* and of luxurious *splendour*, are not connected in artificial antithesis only, but arise, in ready succession, to the observer of either. Of all moral reflections, none are so universal as those which are founded on the instability of mortal distinctions,—the sudden reverses of fortune,—the frailty of beauty,—the precariousness of life itself,—all which reflections are manifestly the result of that species of suggestion which we are considering,—for the very notion of instability implies the previous conception of that state of decay, which is opposite to the flourishing state observed by us. If we see the imperial victor moving along, in all the splendour of majesty and conquest, we must have thought of sudden disaster, before we can moralize on the briefness of earthly triumph. If we see beauty, and youth, and joy, and health, on the cheek, we must have thought of age, or sickness, or misfortune, before we can look on it with sorrowful tenderness. This transition in our trains of thought, from one extreme to its opposite, is perhaps a happy contrivance of nature, for tempering excess of emotion, by interrupting the too long continuance of trains of any kind. It must occasionally produce some little tendency to salutary reflection, even in “the gay licentious proud,” who are fated by their situation, to “dance along” through life,—though it is certainly not on them, but on those by whom they are surrounded, that its beneficial influence most fully operates. This natural tendency, is, in truth, what the lyre of Timotheus is represented to have been, in Dryden’s Ode, when, with a sudden change of subject, he checked the too triumphant exultation of the conqueror of Darius :—

“With downcast looks, the joyless victor sat,  
Revolving in his alter’d soul  
The various turns of chance below ;  
And now and then a sigh he stole ;  
And tears began to flow.” \*

I cannot help thinking, in like manner, that the everlasting tendency to *hope*,—that only happiness of the wretched, which no circumstances of adverse fortune, not even the longest oppression of unchanging misery can wholly subdue, derives much of its energy from this principle. The mere force of contrast must often bring before the imagination, circumstances of happier fortune, and images of past delight. These very images, indeed, are sad, in some respects, especially when they

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\* Alexander’s Feast, Stanza IV. v. 19—23.



first arise, and co-exist, as is were, with the images of misery which produce them, so as to present only the mortifying feeling of the loss which has been suffered ; but they cannot long be present to the mind, without gradually awakening trains of their own, and, in some degree, the emotions with which they were before associated,—emotions which dispose the mind more readily to the belief, that the circumstances which have been, may yet again recur. It is, at least, not unsuitable to the goodness of that mighty Being, who has arranged the wonderful faculties of man, in adaptation to the circumstances in which he was to be placed, that he should thus have formed us to conceive hope, where hope is most needed, and provided an internal source of comfort, in the very excess of misery itself.

Much of the painful retrospection, and, therefore, of the salutary influence of conscience, may arise, in like manner, from the force of this suggesting principle, which must frequently recall the security and happiness of the past, by the very anguish of the present, and which thus, though it cannot restore innocence itself, may, at least, by the images which it awakes, soften the mind to that repentance, which is almost innocence under another form.

It is this tendency of the mind, to pass readily from opposites to opposites, which renders natural the rhetorical figure of *antithesis*. When skilfully and sparingly used, it is unquestionably a figure of great power, from the impression of astonishment which the rapid succession of contrasted objects must always produce. The infinity of worlds, and the narrow spot of earth which we call our country, or our home,—the eternity of ages, and the few hours of life,—the Almighty power of God, and human nothingness,—it is impossible to think of these in succession, without a feeling like that which is produced by the sublimest eloquence. This very facility, however, of producing astonishment, at little cost of real eloquence, renders the antithesis the most dangerous and seductive of all figures to a young orator. It is apt to introduce a symmetry of arrangement, in which scarcely an object is brought forward, that has not to run a parallel of all its qualities, with the qualities of some other object, till even contrast itself becomes monotonous and uniform, by the very frequency of opposition. The thoughts and sentences are so nicely tallied, as to be like pieces of Dutch gardening,—where

“Half the platform just reflects the other.” \*

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\* Pope's Moral Essays, Ep. IV. v. 118.

It is not so that nature operates. She gives variety to the field of our thought, in the same manner as she diversifies her own romantic scenery. Now and then, on the banks of her rivers, rock answers to rock, and foliage to foliage ; but when we look along the wide magnificence of her landscapes, we discover, that still, as in that "wilderness of sweets," which Milton describes, she continues "to wanton as in her prime, and play at will,—wild without rule or art." It is the same in the field of our associations. Sometimes she presents objects together, in exact proportion of resemblance or contrast ; but more frequently she groups them according to other relations, especially according to their former accidental concurrence in time or place, and thus communicates, if I may so express it, to the scenery of thought, that very variety which she spreads over external things.

In the use of antithesis, then,—as much as in the use of the other rhetorical forms of thought and expression before considered,—it is in the general nature of spontaneous suggestion, that we have to find the principle which is to direct us. Contrast is one of the forms of this suggestion ; and occasional antithesis is, therefore, pleasing ; but it is only one of the occasional forms of suggestion ; and, therefore, frequent antithesis is not pleasing, but offensive. Our taste requires, that the series of thoughts and images presented to us should be exquisite in kind ; but, even when they are most exquisite, it requires that, without any obtrusive appearance of labour, they should seem to have risen, as it were, *spontaneously*, and to have been only the perfection of the natural order of thought.

### SECTION III.—*Nearness of Place or Time.*

I proceed now to the consideration of *nearness in place or time*,—the next general circumstance which I pointed out as modifying suggestion.

Of all the general principles of connexion in the trains of our thought, this is evidently the most frequent and extensive in its operation ; even when we confine our attention to its grosser and more obvious forms, without attempting, by any very refined analysis, to reduce to it any of the other tribes of our suggestions. The gross and obvious nearness in place or time, of which alone I speak, when I use Mr. Hume's phrase of contiguity, forms the whole calendar of the great multitude of mankind, who pay little attention to the arbitrary eras

of chronology, but date events by each other, and speak of what happened in the time of some persecution, or rebellion, or great war, or frost, or famine. Even with those who are more accustomed to use, on great occasions, the stricter dates of months and years, this association of events, as near to each other, forms the great bond for uniting in the memory those multitudes of scattered facts, which form the whole history of domestic life, and which it would have been impossible to remember by their separate relation to some insulated point of time. It is the same with nearness in place. To think of one part of a familiar landscape, is to recall the whole. The hill, the grove, the church, the river, the bridge, and all the walks which lead to them, rise before us in immediate succession. On this species of local relation chiefly, have been founded those systems of artificial memory, which at different periods have been submitted to the world, and which, whatever perfections or imperfections they may possess in other respects, certainly demonstrate very powerfully, by the facilities of remembrance which they afford, the influence that is exercised by mere order in place, on the trains of our suggestion. From neighbouring place to place, our thoughts wander readily, with a sort of untaught geography, and, but for this connecting principle, not even the labours of the longest life could have fixed in our mind the simple knowledge of the science. If the idea of the river Nile had been as quick to arise on our conception of Greenland as on that of Egypt; and the Pyrenees, instead of suggesting the conterminous countries of France and Spain, had suggested to us equally at random, China and New Holland, and Lapland and Morocco, it is evident that, however intently and frequently we might have traced on our maps every boundary of every province of every nation on our globe, all would have been, in our mind, one mingled chaos of cities, and streams, and mountains. Every physical science would have been, in like manner, beyond our reach; since all are founded on the suggestion of the common antecedent events, together with their common consequents, in their regular order of proximity. The most powerful illustration, however, of the influence of co-existence or proximity in associating ideas, is the command acquired by the weak infant mind over all the complicated machinery of language. The thing signified recalls the sign, and, conversely, the sign the thing signified, because both have been repeatedly at the same moment presented to the senses; and though it would be too much to say, with the Emperor Charles the Fifth, that a man is as many times a man as he has acquired different languages, we may

still say, with great truth, that we should scarcely have been men at all, if we had not possessed the power of acquiring at least one language.

What a striking picture of this local connexion of feelings, is presented by the state of Europe, at the time of the Crusades!

What was the interest which then roused, and led for the first time to one great general object, so many warring tribes, who had till then never thought of each other but with mutual animosity,—and which brought forward the feudal slave with his feudal tyrant, not as before, to be his blind and devoted instrument of vengeance or rapacity, but to share with perfect equality the same common passion with his lord?

It certainly was not the rescue of a few rocks or plains from the offspring of the invaders who had subdued them—it was for the delivery of that land to which local conceptions associated with it gave a value, that could not be measured with any calculations of wealth, or people, or territory;—for that land, which, trod by prophets, and consecrated by the display of the power and the sufferings of the great Being whom they worshipped as the founder of their faith, presented in almost every step the vestige of a miracle. The belief of wonders, which were said to be still performed there, might concur to raise the importance of the holy sepulchre, and to augment the general devotion,—if, indeed, this very belief itself was not, in its origin, referable to the same cause which gave interest to the scene, being only another form of that lively emotion which must have been felt by those who visited it, and who thought of *him* whom the sepulchre had enclosed, and of the miracles which he had wrought. The sepulchre itself was thus, as it were, mingled with the very image of its divine tenant; and it was only a natural result of the influence of this contiguity, that the wonder-working power, which was known to have been exercised by the one, should have been felt as in some measure a part of the other. The very ardour of emotion, which could not fail to be excited on the first visit to such a spot, would aid this allusion; as it would seem like a sudden inspiration from that awful presence, which, in the liveliness of the conception excited, was felt as if still hovering around the place. To think of the presence of that being, however, was to recognise the power by which miracles were actually performed; and, with such an impression, it was scarcely possible to return from the pilgrimage, without the belief of a sort of holiness derived from it; as if nothing could be impure which had come from the presence of its God.

## CHAPTER IV.

## SECONDARY LAWS OF SUGGESTION.

SINCE the mere conception of one object is sufficient to awaken the conception of many others, that are said to be associated with it, the following inquiry very naturally presents itself. If there be various relations, according to which these parts of our trains of thought may succeed each other,—if the sight of a picture, for example, can recall to me the person whom it resembles, the artist who painted it, the friend who presented it to me, the room in which it formerly was hung, the series of portraits of which it then formed a part, and perhaps many circumstances and events that have been accidentally connected with it,—why does it suggest one of these conceptions rather than the others? The variety of the suggestion is surely sufficient to show, that the laws of suggestion, as a principle of the mind, are not confined merely to the relations of the successive feelings, in which case the suggestion would be uniform,—but that, though these may be considered as primary laws, there must be some other circumstances which modify their peculiar influence at different times, and in different persons, and which may therefore be denominated *secondary laws of suggestion*. To the investigation of the secondary laws, then, as not less important than the primary, I next proceed.

The *first* circumstance, which presents itself, as modifying the influence of the primary laws, in inducing one associate conception rather than another, is the *length of time* during which the original feelings from which they flowed, continued, when they co-existed, or succeeded each other. Every one must be conscious, that innumerable objects pass before him, which are slightly observed at the time, but which form no permanent associations in the mind. The longer we dwell on objects, the more fully do we rely on our future remembrance of them.

In the *second* place, the parts of a train appear to be more closely and firmly associated, as the original feelings have been *more lively*. We remember brilliant objects, more than those which are faint and obscure. We remember for our whole lifetime, the occasions of great joy or sorrow; we forget the occasions of innumerable slight pleasures or pains, which occur to us every hour. That strong feeling of interest and curiosity, which we call attention, not only leads us to dwell longer

on the consideration of certain objects, but also gives more vivacity to the objects, on which we dwell,—and in both these ways tends, as we have seen, to fix them more strongly in the mind.

In the *third* place, the parts of any train are more readily suggested, in proportion as they have been more *frequently renewed*. It is thus we remember, after reading them three or four times over, the verses which we could not repeat when we had read them only once.

In the *fourth* place, the feelings are connected more strongly, in proportion as they are *more or less recent*. Immediately after reading any single line of poetry, we are able to repeat it, though we may have paid no particular attention to it ;—in a very few minutes, unless when we have paid particular attention to it, we are no longer able to repeat it accurately—and in a very short time we forget it altogether. There is, indeed, one very striking exception to this law, in the case of old age ; for events, which happened in youth, are then remembered, when events of the year preceding are forgotten. Yet, even in the case of extreme age,—when the time is not extended so far back,—the general law still holds ; and events, which happened a few hours before, are remembered, when there is total forgetfulness of what happened a few days before.

In the *fifth* place, our successive feelings are associated more closely, as *each has co-existed less with other feelings*. The song which we have never heard but from one person, can scarcely be heard again by us, without recalling that person to our memory ; but there is obviously much less chance of this particular suggestion, if we have heard the same air and words frequently sung by others.

In the *sixth* place, the influence of the primary laws of suggestion is greatly modified by *original constitutional differences*, whether these are to be referred to the mind itself, or to varieties of bodily temperament. Such constitutional differences affect the primary laws in two ways :—First, by augmenting and extending the influence of all of them, as in the varieties of the general power of remembering, so observable in different individuals. Secondly, they modify the influence of the primary laws, by giving greater proportional vigour to one set of tendencies to suggestion than to another. It is in this modification of the suggesting principle, and the peculiar suggestions to which it gives rise, that I conceive the chief part, or, I may say, the whole of what is truly called *genius*, to consist. We have already seen, that the primary tendencies of suggestion are of various species,—some, for example, arising from mere analogy, others from direct contiguity or nearness in

time or place of the very objects themselves,—and it is this difference of the prevailing tendency, as to these two species of suggestions, which I conceive to constitute all that is inventive in genius ;—invention consisting in the suggestions of analogy, as opposed to the suggestions of grosser contiguity.

In the mind of one poet, for example, the conception of his subject awakens only such images as he had previously seen combined with it in the works of others ; and he is thus fated, by his narrow and unvarying range of suggestion, only to add another name to the eternal list of imitators. In a poetic mind of a higher order, the conception of this very subject cannot exist for a moment, without awakening, by the different tendency of the suggesting principle, groups of images which never before had existed in similar combination ; and instead of being an imitator, he becomes a great model, for the imitation of others. The prevailing suggestions of the one, in his trains of thought, are according to the relation of *analogy*, which is almost infinite ; the prevailing suggestions of the other are those of contiguity of the images themselves, which, by its very nature, admits of no novelty, and gives only transcripts of the past. To tame down original genius, therefore, to mere imitation, and to raise the imitator to some rank of genius, it would be necessary only to reverse these simple tendencies. The fancy of the one would then, in the suggestions of mere contiguity, lose all that variety which had distinguished it, and would present only such combinations of images, as had before occurred to it, in similar order, in the works of former writers ;—the fancy of the other, on acquiring the peculiar tendency to suggestions of analogy, would become instantly creative, and new forms of external beauty, or of internal passion, would crowd upon his mind, by their *analogy* to ideas and feelings previously existing.

Even in all those “thoughts that breathe, and words that burn,” and those boundless stores of imagery, which a great poet lavishes with magnificent profusion, there is probably not a single image which has not been an object of our own perception, and therefore capable of being again awakened in our mind, in conformity with the primary laws of suggestion ; nay, there is, perhaps, not a single image which has not repeatedly been thus awakened in our mind. It is not, therefore, in consequence of any more copious store of images, that an original poet is enabled to group them in more beautiful variety, since the forms which he combines are stored in the memory of all, and are common to him with the dullest versifier ; nor is it from any superior tenacity of

general memory, that they rise more readily to his imagination. They *might* rise to both minds, and they *do* rise to both minds, but they rise on different occasions, in consequence merely, of the different directions of the suggesting principle. How many are there, who have seen an old oak, half leafless, amid the younger trees of the forest, and who are therefore capable of remembering it when they think of the forest itself, or of events that happened there ! But it is to the mind of Lucan that it rises, *by analogy*, on the conception of a veteran chief—as in that exquisite simile, which, in contrasting the heroes of Pharsalia, he uses to illustrate the character of Pompey, and the veneration still paid to that ancient greatness, of which little more was left than the remembrance of its glory ;—

“ Stat magni nominis umbra,  
Quæis frugifero quercus sublimis in agro  
Exuvias veteres, populi sacratæque gestans  
Dona ducum ; nec jam validis radicibus hærens  
Pondere fixa suo est ; nudosque per aëra ramos  
Effundens, trunco, non frondibus, efficit umbram ;  
At quamvis primo nutet casura sub Euro,  
Tot circum sylvæ firmo se robore tollant,  
Sola tamen colitur.” \*

The inventions of poetic genius, then, are the suggestions of analogy, —the prevailing suggestions of common minds, are those of mere contiguity ; and it is this difference of the occasions of suggestion, not of the images suggested, which forms the distinctive superiority of original genius.

Copious reading, and a retentive memory, may give to an individual of very humble talent, a greater profusion of splendid images, than existed in any one of the individual minds, on whose sublime conceptions he has dwelt, till they have become, in one sense of the word, his own. There is scarcely an object which he perceives, that may not now bring instantly before him the brightest imagery ; but, for this suggestion, however instant and copious, previous co-existence, or succession of the images, was necessary ; and it is his memory, therefore, which we praise. If half the conceptions which are stored in his mind,—and which rise in it now in its trains of thought by simple suggestion, as readily as they arose in like manner in accordance with some train of thought in the mind of their original authors, had but risen by the suggestion of analogy, as they now arise by the suggestion of

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\* Pharsalia, Lib. I. v. 135—143.



former proximity, what we call *memory*, which is, in truth, only the same suggestion in different circumstances, would have been *fancy*, or *genius*; and his country and age would have had another name to transmit to the reverence and the emulation of the ages that are to follow.

It is the same with inventive genius in the sciences and the severer arts, which does not depend on the mere knowledge of all the phenomena previously observed, or of all the applications of them that have been made to purposes of art, but chiefly on the peculiar tendency of the mind to suggest certain analogous ideas, in successions different from those ordinary successions of grosser contiguity, which occur to common minds. He may, perhaps, be called a philosopher, who knows accurately what others know, and produces, with the same means which others employ, the same effects which they produce. But he alone has philosophic genius, to whose speculations analogous effects suggest analogous causes, and who contrives practically, by the suggestions of analogy, to produce new effects, or to produce the same effects by new and simpler means.

The primary laws of association, then, it appears, as far as they operate in our intellectual exertions, are greatly modified by original constitutional diversities. They are not less modified by constitutional diversities of another kind. These are the diversities of what is called temper, or disposition. It is thus we speak of one person of a *gloomy*, and of another of a *cheerful* disposition; and we avoid the one, and seek the company of the other, as if with perfect confidence, that the trains of thought which rise by spontaneous suggestion to the minds of each will be different, and will be in accordance with that variety of character which we have supposed. To the cheerful, almost every object which they perceive, is cheerful as themselves. In the very darkness of the storm, the cloud which hides the sunshine from their eye, does not hide it from their heart; while to the sullen, no sky is bright, and no scene is fair. There are future fogs, which, to their eyes, pollute and darken the purest airs of spring; and spring itself is known to them less as the season which follows and repairs the desolation of winter that is past, than as the season which announces its approaching return.

The next secondary law of suggestion, to which I proceed, is one akin to the last which we have considered. The primary laws are modified, not by constitutional and permanent differences only, but by differences which occur in the same individual, according to the varying

emotion of the hour. As there are persons, whose general character is gloomy or cheerful, we have, in like manner, our peculiar days or moments in which we pass from one of these characters to the other, and in which our trains of thought are tinctured with the corresponding varieties. A mere change of fortune is often sufficient to alter the whole cast of sentiment. Those who are in possession of public station, and power and affluence, are accustomed to represent affairs in a favourable light; the disappointed competitors for place, to represent them in the most gloomy light; and though much of this difference may unquestionably be ascribed to wilful mis-statement in both cases, much of it is, as unquestionably, referable to that difference of colouring in which objects appear to the successful and the unsuccessful. The same remark may be applied to the different periods of life, to the happy thoughtlessness of youth, and to the cautious, calculating sadness of old age. The comparative gaiety of our earlier years, is not merely a cause, but an effect also, of the tendency of the mind, at that period, to suggest images of hope and pleasure, on almost every occasion.

If even a slight momentary feeling of joy or sorrow have the power of modifying our suggestions, in accordance with it, emotions of a stronger and lasting kind must influence the trains of thought still more;—the meditations of every day rendering stronger the habitual connexions of such thoughts as accord with the peculiar frame of mind. It is in this way that every passion, which has one fixed object,—such as love, jealousy, revenge, derives nourishment from itself, suggesting images, that give it, in return, new force and liveliness. We see, in every thing, what we feel in ourselves; and the thoughts which external things seem to suggest, are thus, in part at least, suggested by the permanent emotion within.

The temporary diversities of state, that give rise to varieties of suggestion, are not mental only, but corporeal; and this difference of bodily state furnishes another secondary law, in modification of the primary. I need not refer to the extreme cases of intoxication or actual delirium,—to the copious flow of follies, which a little wine, or a few grains of opium, may extract from the proudest reasoner. In circumstances less striking, how different are the trains of thought in health and in sickness,—after a temperate meal, and after a luxurious excess! It is not to the animal powers only, that the burden of digestion may become oppressive, but to the intellectual also; and often to the intellectual powers even more than to the animal. In that most

delightful of all states, when the bodily frame has recovered from disease, and when, in the first walk beneath the open sunshine, amid the blossoms and balmy air of summer, there is a mixture of corporeal and mental enjoyment, in which it is not easy to discriminate what images of pleasure arise from every object, that, in other states of health, might have excited no thought or emotion whatever.

There is yet another principle which modifies the primary laws of suggestion with very powerful influence. This is the principle of habit. I do not speak of its influence in suggesting images, which have been already frequently suggested in a certain order,—for it would then be simpler to reduce the habit itself to the mere power of association. I speak of cases, in which the images suggested may have been of recent acquisition, but are suggested more readily in consequence of general tendencies produced by prior habits. When men of different professions observe the same circumstances, listen to the same story, or peruse the same work, their subsequent suggestions are far from being the same; and could the future differences of the associate feelings that are to rise, be foreseen by us at the time, we should probably be able to trace many of them to former professional peculiarities, which are thus always unfortunately apt to be more and more aggravated by the very suggestions to which they have themselves given rise. The most striking example, however, of the power of habit in modifying suggestion, is in the command which it gives to the orator, who has long been practised in extempore elocution; a command not of words merely, but of thoughts and judgments, which, at the very moment of their sudden inspiration, appear like the long weighed calculations of deliberative reflection. All the divisions of his subject start before him at once; image after image, as he proceeds, arises to illustrate it; and proper words in proper places are all the while embodying his sentiments, as if without the slightest effort of his own.

## CHAPTER V.

THE LIVELINESS OF THE SUGGESTING FEELINGS AFFECTS THAT OF THE FEELINGS SUGGESTED.—OF THE VIRTUAL CO-EXISTENCE OF FEELINGS.

SECTION I.—*The Degree of Liveliness of the Suggesting Feelings influences greatly that of the Feelings Suggested.*

THE next inquiry relates to the difference of liveliness of the feeling which forms a part of a train of thought, according as that which suggested it may have been itself more or less lively.

The conception of an object may, it is evident, be suggested in two ways,—by the perception of some other object really existing without ; or by some other conception, previously existing in a train of internal thought. But, though it may be suggested in either way, it is by no means indifferent, with respect to it, in which of the two ways the suggestion has taken place.

“The influence of perceptible objects,” says Mr. Stewart, “in reviving former thoughts and former feelings, is more particularly remarkable. After time has, in some degree, reconciled us to the death of a friend, how wonderfully are we affected the first time we enter the house where he lived ! Every thing we see,—the apartment where he studied,—the chair upon which he sat,—recall to us the happiness we have enjoyed together ; and we should feel it a sort of violation of that respect we owe to his memory, to engage in any light or indifferent discourse when such objects are before us. In the case, too, of those remarkable scenes, which interest the curiosity from the memorable persons or transactions which we have been accustomed to connect with them in the course of our studies, the fancy is more awakened by the actual perception of the scene itself, than by the mere conception or imagination of it. Hence the pleasure we enjoy in visiting classical ground ; in beholding the retreats which inspired the genius of our favourite authors, or the fields which have been dignified by exertions of heroic virtue. How feeble are the emotions produced by the liveliest conception of modern Italy, to what the poet felt, when amidst the ruins of Rome,

‘He drew th’ inspiring breath of ancient arts,  
 ————And trod the sacred walks,  
 Where, at each step, imagination burns !’

"The well-known effect of a particular tune on Swiss regiments when at a distance from home, furnishes a very striking illustration of the peculiar power of a perception, or of an impression on the senses, to awaken associated thoughts and feelings; and numberless facts of a similar nature must have occurred to every person of moderate sensibility, in the course of his own experience.

" 'Whilst we were at dinner,' says Captain King, 'in this miserable hut, on the banks of the river Awatska,—the guests of a people with whose existence we had before been scarce acquainted, and at the extremity of the habitable globe,—a solitary half-worn pewter spoon, whose shape was familiar to us, attracted our attention; and, on examination, we found it stamped on the back with the word *London*. I cannot pass over this circumstance in silence, out of gratitude for the many pleasant thoughts, the anxious hopes, and tender remembrances, it excited in us. Those who have experienced the effects that long absence, and extreme distance, from their native country produce on the mind, will readily conceive the pleasure such a trifling incident can give.' " \*

Of the truth of these delightful influences, who is there that can doubt? Distant as we are from those lands, which, in the studies of our boyhood, endeared and consecrated by so many remembrances, were to us almost like the very country of our birth, it is scarcely possible to think of ancient Rome or Greece, without mingling, with an interest more than passion, in the very ages of their glory. Some name or exploit instantly occurs to our mind; which even in the faintness of our conception, is sufficient to transport us, for some few moments, from the scene of duller things around. But, when we tread on the soil itself,—when, as Cicero says, speaking of Athens, "*Quocunque ingredimur, in aliquam historiam vestigium ponimus*,"—all which history has made dear to us is renewed to our very eyes. There are visionary forms around us, which make the land on which we tread, not the country that is, but the country that has been. We see again the very groves of Academus;

" And Plato's self

Seems half-emerging from his olive bowers,  
To gather round him all the Athenian Sons  
Of Wisdom."

It is this peculiar tendency of objects of perception, to throw a brighter colouring on the ideas they suggest, that gives the chief value

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\* Philosophy of the Human Mind, Chap. V. Part I. Sect. 1.

to the monuments of national gratitude. The conquests of the Roman generals must have been known to all the citizens of Rome ; but it was in the triumphal procession to the capitol, that they must have felt most proudly the grandeur of the Republic, and the honour of the individual victor ; and must have caught that emulation, which was to lead them afterwards through fields of equal danger, to ascend the same glorious car. The trophy, the obelisk, the triumphal arch, would indeed, be of little interest, if they were only to recall to us the names and dates of the actions they commemorate ; but, while they record past honours, they are, in truth, the presages, and more than presages, of honours to come. In Sparta an oration was every year pronounced on the tomb of Leonidas. Is it possible to suppose, that, in such a scene, and with such an object before them, the orator and the assembled nation, who listened to him, felt no deeper emotion, than they would have done, if the same language had been addressed from any other place, unconnected with so sacred a remembrance ?

When Antony, in his funeral eulogium of Cæsar uncovered the body before the people, he knew well what powerful persuasion the wounds, which he pointed out, would give to his oratory. It has been well remarked, "that never had funeral eloquence so powerful an impression, for it prepared the slavery of twenty nations. The dead body of Lucretia had freed Rome from the fetters of its tyrants,—the dead body of Cæsar fastened on it again its chains."

"This influence of perceptible objects in awakening associated thoughts and associated feelings," says Mr. Stewart, "seems to arise, in a great measure, from their permanent operation as exciting or suggesting causes. When a train of thought takes its rise from an idea or conception, the first idea soon disappears, and a series of others succeeds, which are gradually less and less related to that with which the train commenced ; but, in the case of perception, the exciting cause remains steadily before us ; and all the thoughts and feelings which have any relation to it, crowd into the mind in rapid succession ; strengthening each other's effects, and all conspiring in the same general impression." \*

This explanation of a very striking phenomenon, is simple and beautiful ; and, it may be remarked, in confirmation of it, that it is not every object of perception, which renders the trains of ideas that succeed it more vivid, but only such objects, as are in themselves interesting ;

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\* Philosophy of the Human Mind, Chap. V. Part I. Sect. I.

and, therefore, lead the mind to dwell on them, giving that time, therefore, which Mr. Stewart supposes to be necessary, for gathering and bringing forward the crowd of associate ideas, which conspire in heightening the particular emotion. The sight of any thing indifferent to us may suggest various conceptions, without any peculiar liveliness of the conceptions suggested. In the instance of the pewter spoon, so pathetically related by Captain King,—an instance, which shows how much it is in the power of circumstances to give interest, and even a species of dignity, to the most vulgar object, there can be no doubt, that often before the discovery of it, innumerable objects, familiar to all the crew, must have brought their distant home to their remembrance. But such a spoon, found in a country so distant, must have been an object of astonishment; and the importance which the surprise at the discovery gave to it, must have caused them to dwell on it, till it awakened all those tender remembrances, which an object more familiar, and therefore less interesting, would have failed to excite.

Just, however, as I conceive Mr. Stewart's explanation to be, to the whole extent to which the circumstances assigned by him can operate, I am inclined to think, there is another circumstance, which concurs very forcibly in the effect, and is probably the chief source of the vivid emotion. That there is something more than the mere permanence of the object of perception, concerned in giving additional liveliness to the ideas it suggests, is, I think, evident from this, that, when the external object is very interesting, it produces a considerable effect, before the permanence can have operated so far as to have collected and condensed, if I may so express it, any very considerable number of ideas. After the first impulse of emotion, indeed, the longer the object continues present, so as to produce a greater number of associate thoughts and feelings,—all, as Mr. Stewart says, “strengthening each other's effects, and all conspiring in the same general impression,” the more lively, of course, or at least the more permanent, must the emotion become. Yet still, the first burst feeling, almost at the very moment of the perception, remains unexplained. To a woman of lively sensibility, who, after many years of happy wedlock, has been deprived by death of the father of her children, and who has learned, at length, that sort of tender resignation which time alone inspires, so as to think of his memory, not indeed without sorrow, but with a sort of tranquil sadness,—to such a person, the discovery of a letter, a book, a drawing, or any other trifling and unexpected memorial, is sufficient to fill the eyes and the heart with instant and overwhelming

emotion. Beside the mere permanence, therefore, of objects of perception, there must be some other circumstance of influence, which precedes the effect of the permanence, and probably continues to augment it.

This additional circumstance appears to me to be the following : When any object of perception is so interesting as to lead us to pause in considering it, the associate feelings which it suggests, are not consecutive merely to the perception ; but, as the perception is continued for a length of time, they co-exist, and are mingled with it, so as to form with it one complex feeling. With the perception, however, is of course combined the belief of the actual external reality of its object ; and this feeling of reality being a part of that complex whole, of which the co-existing associate ideas are also constituent parts, mingles with them all, so as, when the imaginary part readily harmonizes with the real, to diffuse over the whole, which is felt as if one scene or group, a sort of faint temporary impression of reality. In such a process, the illusive impression of reality, which the perception communicates to the co-existing associate ideas, must of course be greater in proportion as the perception is itself more lively ; and in proportion, too, as by the interest which it excites, it leads the mind to dwell on it longer, so as to produce that heightened effect of emotion, so justly ascribed by Mr. Stewart to the groups of kindred ideas and feelings. Yet, independently of the influence of these groups, as a number of conceptions, the mere illusion produced by the mingling reality of the perception, with which they blend and harmonize, may of itself, in very interesting cases, be sufficient to account for that sudden burst of overpowering emotion, which otherwise it would be so difficult to explain.

It is not to be supposed, indeed, that the illusion remains very long. On the contrary, there is reason to believe, that, almost every moment, the conviction of the absolute unreality of what is merely conceived, recurs, and the whole which seemed to exist before us vanishes again, and is lost ; but almost every moment, likewise, the illusion itself recurs, by the mere co-existence of the perception of the real object with the unreal, but harmonizing conceptions. That the illusion is frequently broken, however, and the feeling of the presence of a number of beloved objects renewed and lost in rapid succession, is far from unfavourable to the violence of the emotion which it produces ; since innumerable facts show, that the mind is never so readily moved to extreme emotion, as when it fluctuates between two opposite feel-



ings. In the sudden alternations of joy and grief, hope and fear, confiding love and jealousy, the agitation of each seems not to lessen the violence of the other, but to communicate to it, in addition, no small portion of its own violence. Hence it happens, that eyes, which can retain their tears, with firm and inflexible patience, under the pressure of any lasting affliction, dissolve instantly into the very softness of sorrow, not on any increase of misery, but on the sudden impulse of some unexpected joy. The agitation of an interesting allusion, therefore, rapidly conceived, and rapidly dispelled, is the very state which, from our knowledge of the analogous phenomena of mind, might be supposed the most likely to produce an overflow of any tender emotion.

I have already stated the general mode in which I conceive perception to give peculiar vividness to the associate feelings which it suggests.

The general doctrine, however, will perhaps be best illustrated by the analysis of what takes place in a particular instance. When the Swiss is at a distance from his country, some accidental image, in a train of thought, may lead him in fancy to his native mountains; but, in this case, the ideas of his imagination are not attached to any thing external and permanent, and are, therefore, comparatively faint. When, however, he actually hears, in all the vividness of external sense, the song of his home,—the conception of his home is immediately excited, and continues to co-exist with the impression produced by the well-known air. That air, however, is not a faint imagination, but a reality. It is not the remembrance of a perception, but is, in truth, the very same perception, which once formed a part of his complicated sensations, when the song was warbled along his valley, and the valley and the song were together present to his eye and ear. That actual song, and not the *perception* indeed, but the *conception* of the valley, are now again present to his mind; and it is not wonderful, therefore, that the reality of the song, as actually co-existing and blending with the conception of the scene, in the same manner as they had often been mingled when both were real, should communicate to it, in the momentary illusion, a portion of its own vividness.

It may perhaps be thought, that, in supposing this diffusion of the feeling of external reality,—from an object perceived, to the suggested conceptions that co-exist with it,—I assume more, in the present case, than any analogous phenomena justify. To those, however, who are acquainted with the theory of vision, it must on the contrary appear.

that the explanation takes for granted nothing more, than the possibility of that which must be allowed to take place, during almost every moment of our waking hours, in by far the most important class of our perceptions. All, which we see by the eye,—even if superficial extension be truly seen by it,—is a mere expanse of light, various perhaps in tint, more or less brilliant, and more or less extended. It is by the suggestion and combination of the associate ideas of another sense, that we *seem* to perceive longitudinal distance, and all the figures which depend on it. Yet the *associate ideas*, which are, of course, only imaginary, and the *real sensations*, are so blended in our mind, that we ascribe external reality equally to both parts of the complex whole. We do not see, and remember, or infer; but the sight, and the mere remembrance, or inference, form, as it were, one common and equal sensation, which we term *vision*. The diffusion, or, in other words, the communication of the feeling of reality from an object of perception to conceptions suggested by it, and continuing to co-exist with the direct perception, here unquestionably takes place,—and takes place at every moment of vision. When I suppose, therefore, the Swiss, on hearing the familiar song of his native cottage, to spread over the image of his cottage that reality, which is actually felt in the song, I suppose only an operation of precisely the same kind with that, which took place, as often as the cottage itself was a real object of his sight.

It is by a similar operation, that the superstitious, in twilight, incorporate their fears with the objects which they dimly perceive, till the whole thus compounded, assumes the appearance of external reality. The moanings of the wind are the voice of a spirit, to which their apprehension readily invents a language; and the white sheet, or other shadowy outline, gives a sort of permanent and terrifying body to the spectres of their own mind. It is imagination, indeed, still; but it is imagination combined with perception, and readily harmonizing with it; and the spectral forms and voices seem truly to exist, because there are forms which are truly seen, and sounds which are truly heard.

I may remark, as an analogous illustration of this tendency of the mind to combine the reality of perception with the harmonizing conceptions which it suggests, and with which it continues to blend, that an effect in some degree similar,—different, indeed, as might be supposed, in force, but analogous in kind,—seems to take place, in the combination of any very vivid conception with other mere conceptions,—when these two harmonize and unite readily as a complete whole. There is, as it were, a diffusion of the vividness of the one, over the

faintness of the other. The more vivid,—that is to say, the more nearly approaching to the strength of reality,—the one conception may be, the more fully is it diffused in unison with the other, and the more difficult, consequently, does it become, to regard this other as separate from it,—so difficult, indeed, in many cases, as almost to resist the influence of the most undoubting speculative belief. In the case of our *emotions*,—the very nature of which is to throw a peculiar vividness on the conceptions that harmonize with them, there can be no doubt as to this diffusion of lively feeling,—by the influence of which, in impassioned reverie, our conceptions, that would otherwise be comparatively faint, sometimes appear to us more truly real, than the objects really existing without. It is not wonderful, therefore, that the effect which our emotions, as mere lively feelings harmonizing with certain conceptions, produce in vivifying those conceptions with which they harmonize, should be produced, in some degree, by our conceptions. When, for example, by the classical studies of our early years, our minds have become almost as well acquainted with the warriors of Greece and Troy, as with the warriors of our own time, and the gates and towers of Ilium seem, as it were, to be present to our very eyes,—if we strive to think of the Troad, in its present state of desolation, it is scarcely possible for us to conceive it as it is. Our livelier conception of the past diffuses itself in some measure over our conception of the present scene; and notwithstanding all the information which we have received, and the full credit which we give to the veracity of the travellers from whose report we receive it, we still, when we think of the scene, imagine on it at least some vestiges of past grandeur existing, with a sort of shadowy reality.

The difficulty which we feel in this case, in imagining the absolute desolation of the Troad, arises from the greater vividness of our conception of ancient Troy, than of our conception of the scene which the same spot now presents,—a vividness which almost incessantly mingles the more lively with the fainter conceptions, in spite of our effort to separate them. Our calm belief attends the latter of these conceptions; but there is an illusion of reality attached to the greater vividness of the former, which is almost every moment mingling with the other; though it is, every other moment, overcome by the opposite belief which is too strong to be wholly subdued. This constant mingling and separation of the two, forms that feeling of perplexity and effort of which we are conscious, in attempting to consider, for any length of time, the scene as it truly is, and as we truly believe it to be.

To lessen this feeling of effort, as if by a more ready transition, nothing is so effectual as the conception of that state of decay which is intermediate between grandeur and absolute desolation.

Rome, thus in ruins, is easily conceived by us; for the ruins, in their magnificent decay, are themselves a vivid picture of that grandeur of which we have been accustomed to think. But Rome, if it had no monument of art remaining, and had only its seven naked hills to mark its ancient site, scarcely could be conceived by us for a few moments in succession; its former grandeur rising on our remembrance, without any intermediate conception into which it might softly fade; and mingling, therefore, its own entire reality, as vividly conceived by us, with the fainter conceptions of that bare soil on which all its miracles of splendour arose.

In many cases, in which the perception of new, or long-lost objects, gives warmth and animation to our trains of thought, there is another circumstance which must have considerable influence. An object, that is daily before our eyes, becomes associated with innumerable ideas, which have no peculiar harmony or agreement with each other; and though it may suggest these variously, at different times, it is still apt to mingle some of them together, especially if it occupy the attention for any length of time. A memorial which we have received from a friend, for example, must in a very short time, if it remain in our possession, be associated with many events and feelings that have no relation to our friend. These, as more recent, may become of readier suggestion, in conformity with that secondary law which has been stated; and at last, by mingling in the suggestion many irrelative remembrances, cannot fail to weaken more and more the interest which the primary, and more tender image, would otherwise afford. But an object newly discovered, such as any unexpected relic of a long-lost friend, presents the instant image of him to our mind, and presents it unmixed with other conceptions, that could not have co-existed with it, without weakening its particular impression.

There is yet another circumstance, which I conceive must be taken into account, in every such case of unexpected discovery:—This is the influence of the feeling of *astonishment* itself. In common circumstances, for which we are prepared, we readily, and almost unconsciously, exercise a self-command, which keeps down any violent emotion. But, when we are struck with new and unexpected circumstances, this self-command is often completely suspended; and we yield to the first emotion that arises, however inconsistent it may be with the general character

of our mind. The sudden appearance of a foe in ambush, spreads terror to the breasts of those who would have marched undaunted in the open field, in the face of any danger that could have been opposed to them. It is probable, therefore, that when the crew of Captain King's ship melted into tears on discovering, in a remote and barbarous country, a pewter spoon stamped with the word "London," it was partly under the influence of the sudden astonishment which they must have felt,—an astonishment which, if it had arisen from circumstances of a different kind, might perhaps have excited a panic of terror, as it then excited, what, in relation to the rugged sternness of a ship's company, might almost be considered as a sort of panic of tender emotion.

## SECTION II.—*Virtual Co-existence of Feelings.*

These observations on the influence which objects of perception have, by their permanence, as well as by their reality, in giving additional liveliness to our associate feelings, lead me to remark a property of the suggesting principle, which, however much neglected, seems to me, in the various applications that may be made of it, of the greatest importance, since, without it, it is impossible to explain many of the most striking phenomena of thought. We are so much accustomed to talk of the *successions* of our ideas, of the *trains* of our ideas, of the *current* of our thought; and to use so many other phrases of mere succession, to the exclusion of all notions of co-existence, in speaking of the modifications of the principle of suggestion, that, by the habitual use of these terms, we are led to think of our ideas as *consecutive* only, and to suppose that because there is truly a certain series of states of the mind in regular progression, the state of the mind at one moment must be so different from the state of mind of the moment preceding, that one idea must always fade as a new one arises. That the sequence may sometimes be thus exclusive in the very moment, of all that preceded the particular suggestion, I do not deny, though there are many circumstances which lead me to believe, that, if this ever occur, it is at least far from being the general case.

Thus, to take an instance in some degree similar to those which we have before considered,—when, at a distance from home, and after an interval of years, we listen to any simple song with which the remembrance of a friend of our youth is connected, how many circumstances not merely rise again, but rush upon us together? The friend himself,

—the scene where we last sat and listened to him,—the domestic circle that listened with us,—a thousand circumstances of that particular period, which had perhaps escaped us, are again present to our mind ; and with all these is mingled the actual perception of the song itself. As the parts of the song succeed each other, they call up occasionally some new circumstance of the past ; but we do not, on that account, lose the group which were before assembled. The new circumstance is only added to them, and the song still continues to blend with the whole, the pleasure of its own melody, or rather mingling with them in mutual diffusion, at once gives and borrows delight.

If this virtual *co-existence*, in the sense now explained, be true of the case in which the perception mingles with suggestion,—it is true, though in a less remarkable degree, of our conceptions alone. Had the same ballad, as in the former case, not been actually sung, but merely suggested by some accidental circumstance, though our emotion would have been less lively, and though fewer objects and events, connected with the scene, might have arisen, it would still, probably have suggested the friend, the place, the time, and many other circumstances, not in separate and exclusive succession, like the moving figures of a continued train, but multiplying and mingling as they arose. Of the innumerable objects of external sense, which pass before our eyes, in the course of a day, how many are there, which excite only a momentary sensation,—forgotten, almost as soon as it is felt ; while, on many others, we dwell with the liveliest interest. In like manner, there are many of our ideas of suggestion, which are as indifferent to us, as the thousand objects that flit before our eyes. They exist, therefore, but for a moment, or little more than a moment, and serve only for the suggestion of other ideas, some of which, perhaps, may be equally shortlived, while others, more lively and interesting, pause longer in the mind,—and though they suggest ideas connected with themselves, continue with them, and survive, perhaps, the very conceptions which they suggest. I look at a volume on my table,—it recalls to me the friend from whom I received it,—the remembrance of him suggests to me the conception of his family,—of an evening which I spent with them,—and of various subjects of our conversation. Yet the conception of my friend may continue, mingled, indeed, with various conceptions, as they rise successively, but still co-existing with them,—and is, perhaps, the very part of the complex group, that, after a long train of thought, during which it had been constantly present, suggests at last some new conception, that

introduces a different train of its own, of which the conception of my friend no longer forms a part.

But for this *continuance* and *co-existence*, of which I speak, I cannot but think, that the regular prosecution of any design would be absolutely impossible. When we sit down to study a particular subject, we must have a certain conception, though a dim and shadowy one, of the subject itself. To study it, however, is not to have that conception alone, but to have successively various other conceptions, its relations to which we endeavour to trace. The conception of our particular subject, therefore, must, in the very first stage of our progress, suggest some other conception. But this second conception, if it alone were present, having various relations of its own, as well as its relation to the subject which suggested it, would probably excite a third conception, which had no reference to the original subject,—and this third, a fourth, and thus a whole series, all equally unrelated to the subject which we wished to study. It would hence seem impossible, to think of the same subject, even for a single minute. Yet we know that the fact is very different, and that we often occupy whole hours in this manner, without any remarkable deviation from our original design. Innumerable conceptions, indeed, arise during this time, but all are more or less intimately related to the subject, by the continued conception of which they have every appearance of being suggested; and, if it be allowed, that the conception of a particular subject both suggests trains of conceptions, and continues to exist together with the conception which it has suggested, every thing for which I contend, in the present case, is implied in the admission.

What would be that selection of images, of which poets speak, if their fancy suggested only a fleeting series of consecutive images? To select, implies not the succession, but the co-existence of objects of choice; and there can be no discrimination and preference of parts of a train of thought, if each separate part have wholly ceased to exist, when another has arisen.

There is, then, it appears, a continued co-existence of some of our associate feelings, with the feelings which they suggest. And it is well for us, that nature has made this arrangement. I do not speak at present of its importance to our intellectual powers, as essential to all continuity of design, and to every wide comparison of the relations of things, for this I have already endeavoured to demonstrate. I speak of the infinite accession which it affords to our happiness and affections. By this, indeed, we acquire the power of fixing, in a great

degree, our too fugitive enjoyments, and concentrating them in the objects which we love. When the mother caresses her infant, the delight which she feels is not lost in the moment, in which it appears to fade. It still lives in the innocent and smiling form that inspired it, and is suggested again, when the idea of that smile passes across her mind. An infinity of other pleasures are, in the progress of life, associated in like manner; and with these additional associations, the feeling which her child excites, becomes proportionately more complex. It is not the same unvarying image, exciting the remembrance, first of one pleasure, and then of another, for, in that case, the whole delight would not, at any one moment, be greater than if the two feelings alone co-existed; but a thousand past feelings are present together, and continuing with the new images which themselves awake, produce one mingled result of tenderness, which it would be impossible distinctly to analyze. Why is it, that the idea of our *home*, and of our *country*, has such powerful dominion over us,—that the native of the most barren soil, when placed amid fields of plenty, and beneath a sunshine of eternal spring, should still sigh for the rocks, and the wastes, and storms which he had left?

What extensive applications may be made of this doctrine of the continuance of the suggesting feeling, in co-existence with the feelings which it suggests, will be seen, when we proceed to the consideration of various intellectual phenomena, and still more, of our emotions in general, particularly of those which regard our taste and our moral affections. It is this condensation of thoughts and feelings, indeed, on which, in a great measure, depends that intellectual and moral progress, of which it is the noblest excellence of our being, even in this life, to be susceptible, and which may be regarded as a pledge of that far nobler progression which is to be our splendid destiny in the unceasing ages that await us, when the richest acquisitions of the sublimest genius, to which we have looked almost with the homage of adoration, on this mortal scene, may seem to us like the very rudiments of infant thought. Even then, however, the truths which we have been capable of attaining here, may still, by that condensation and diffusion of which I have spoken, form an element of the transcendent knowledge which is to comprehend all the relations of all the worlds in infinity, as we are now capable of tracing the relations of the few planets that circle our sun; and, by a similar diffusion, those generous affections, which it has been our delight to cultivate in our social communion on earth, may not only prepare us for a purer and more glorious communion,



but be themselves constituent elements of that ever-increasing happiness, which, still prolonging, and still augmenting the joys of virtue, is to reward, through immortality, the sufferings, and the toils, and the struggles of its brief mortal career.

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## CHAPTER VI.

### REASONS FOR PREFERRING THE TERM *SUGGESTION*, TO THE PHRASE *ASSOCIATION OF IDEAS*.

THAT, when two objects have been perceived by us in immediate succession, the presence of the one will often suggest the other,—though this second object, or a similar external cause, be not present,—is that great fact of association, or suggestion, which we must admit, whatever opinion we may form with respect to its nature, or whatever name we may give to it. But when the former of these two objects first suggests the conception of the latter, in the absence of this latter, and at a considerable interval of time, after the first co-existence of the two perceptions, or their first proximity to each other, we may inquire, whether the suggestion be the consequence of a law, or general tendency of the mind, first operating at that moment of the suggestion itself;—or the consequence of another earlier law of mind, distinct from that of the mere perception itself, but operating, at the time, when both objects were originally perceived together, whether, during the original perception of the two objects, at the period long preceding the first suggestion of one by the other, there was, beside the simple perception of each, some other intellectual process or operation, by which a union might be supposed to be formed of the two conceptions, in all their future recurrences,—or, simply, whether such be not the natural constitution of the mind, that one affection of it succeeds another affection of it, and that the successions occur in a certain order; in short, whether the laws that regulate recurrence be laws of *association*, in the strictest sense of that word, as expressive of some former connecting process,—or merely laws of *suggestion*, as expressive of the simple tendency of the mind, in the very moment in which it is affected in a certain manner, to exist immediately afterwards in a certain different state.

At first sight, the question which this distinction implies may seem to be a question only as to the use of a term, and to involve little actual difference ; or, if the actual difference which it involves be admitted, it may seem a question which it is not in our power to solve ; since, on either supposition, whether the suggestions arise from some earlier process of mysterious association, at the time of the first co-existence or proximity of the perceptions, or from some equally mysterious limitation of the subsequent spontaneous suggestions to a certain series, the suggestions themselves must be the same, and must follow in the same order.

It will appear, however, on a more attentive consideration, that the distinction, far from being verbal merely, is, in truth, a most important one, and has had a powerful, and, as I conceive, a most injurious influence, on all the arrangements which have been made of them by philosophers,—and that the discovery of the period of the primary influence of the laws that regulate suggestion is not beyond the reach of observation,—on that view of the phenomena which supposes them to result from tendencies to suggestion of various kinds, such as the resemblances, contrasts, and contiguities, of which writers on this branch of intellectual physiology are accustomed to speak.

I have already, in treating of the primary laws of suggestion, stated my belief, that, by a more refined analysis than writers on this subject have been accustomed to make, the varieties of suggestion might all be found to be reducible to one general tendency of succession, according to the mere order of former proximity or co-existence ; and I cannot but think that this reduction has appeared more difficult than it truly is, in consequence of the unfortunate phrase, *association of ideas*,—which, seeming to confine the tendency of suggestion to our ideas alone, made it impossible, in many cases, to discover the necessary proximity—when the proximity had never really existed with respect to the ideas in the train, but was to be found only in some emotion, or internal sentiment or judgment, that was common to the two.

In treating of the suggestions of resemblance, accordingly, I ventured to give an example of this very nice analysis, in which similar objects were supposed to be suggested by similar objects, in consequence merely of some part which was the same in both, and which excited, by the influence of former proximity, the other parts, which coexisted with it, as one great whole.

In cases of the more shadowy resemblance of analogy, in like manner, —as in those comparisons of objects with objects which constitute the similes and metaphors of poetry,—though there may never have

been in the mind any proximity of the very images compared, there may have been a proximity of each to an emotion of some sort, which, as common to both, might render each capable indirectly of suggesting the other. When, for example, the whiteness of untrodden snow brings to our mind the innocence of an unpolluted heart,—or a fine morning of spring the cheerful freshness of youth,—they may do this only by the influence of a common emotion excited by them. The tendency to suggestions of analogy, which, in distinction from the tendency to suggestion of the grosser contiguity of objects themselves, or their direct images, I stated to be the great characteristic or constituent of inventive genius, may thus be only another form, or, at least, a very natural result of that susceptibility of vivid emotion, which, even by those who have not formed the same theory of genius, is usually conceived to be characteristic of the poetic temperament. The livelier the emotion may be, the longer must it continue to co-exist with objects, and the quicker and surer, therefore, must it be to recall such objects as have at any time co-existed with it. There may, therefore, when there is no proximate association of ideas, be a proximity as real in the mixed suggestions of ideas and emotions.

In contrast, I might perhaps, say, in like manner, that suggestion takes place, not indeed by the union of causation with resemblance, as Mr. Hume strangely supposed, but by resemblance alone, and therefore, according to the view now given, by proximity,—a resemblance, however, not in the contrasted object itself, but in some emotion, or other secondary feeling, to which that contrasted object gives rise. All objects that are strikingly contrasted must agree, at least, in this one respect, that they are very strange of their kind. When we see any one, for example, with a single feature of his face of very unusual dimensions, as a very large nose, the feeling that rises in our mind, almost immediately after gazing on it, is the reflection how very singular a nose this is. This reflection is itself a certain state of the mind which, if produced in any way, may afterwards excite, as in the ordinary cases of suggestion, the accompanying conception of the object which first produced it. When we happen afterwards to see an individual with a nose as remarkably short, the very same reflection will as instantly arise; and this sameness of the proximate feeling, may be sufficient, by mere proximity, to induce, on the perception of one of the objects, the conception of the contrasted object—that is contrasted in form, indeed, but still similar in the sentiment which it excites. In the case of every other relation, too, it may be said, in like manner,

that the relative suggests its correlative, because, whatever be the circumstance of agreement in which the relation consists, this circumstance is common to both, and may form a connecting link of mere proximity, as in any other case of resemblance, when the common circumstance is suggested by either of the two.

Proceeding, then, on the general belief of distinct tribes of suggestions, in our inquiry into the evidence which the phenomena afford of a previous influence of association, let us take for an example, a case of *contrast*, in which the perception or conception of one object, suggests immediately the conception of some other object, of which the qualities are so dissimilar, as to be absolutely opposite to those qualities which we are perceiving or conceiving at the moment.

The first sight of a person of stature remarkable beyond the common size, is sufficient, in many cases, to bring instantly before us, in conception, the form of some one, with whom we may happen to be acquainted, of stature as remarkably low.—In consequence of what law of the mind does this suggestion take place?

If we say merely, that such is the nature of the mind, that it is not affected by external objects alone, but that the state or affection of mind which we call a conception or idea of an object,—in whatever manner excited,—may give immediate rise to other ideas, of which no external cause at the moment exists before us; that one idea, however, does not suggest indifferently any other idea, but only such as have some peculiar relation to itself; that there is a considerable variety of such relations, resemblance, contiguity, and others; and that of this variety of relations, according to which ideas may spontaneously suggest each other, *contrast* is one;—we deliver an accurate statement of the facts, and of the whole of the facts; and whatever goes beyond this, to some earlier mysterious process of union,—even though it could, by a skilful effort of ingenuity, be reconciled with the phenomena,—must still be a supposition only; for, if we trust the evidence of our consciousness, which affords the only evidence, we have no knowledge of any intermediate process that can have the name of *association*, but simply of the original perceptions, and the subsequent suggestion. Of this the slightest retrospect will convince any one. It is to our consciousness, then, at the time of the perception, and the time of the suggestion, that we must look. Now all of which we are conscious at the time of perception might be precisely the same, though there were no memory whatever after perception ceases, or though in remembrance, there were no such order of suggestions afterwards, as is supposed to justify the

supposition of some pre-existing association, but on the contrary, the utmost irregularity and confusion. Our consciousness, during perception, is thus far from indicating any process of association; and all of which we are conscious, at the time of the suggestion itself, is the mere succession of one feeling to another, not certainly of any prior process on which this suggestion has depended. The laws of *suggestion*, then, as opposed to what may be called *association*,—or, in other words, the circumstances which seem to regulate the spontaneous successions of our ideas, without reference to any former intellectual process, except the simple primary perceptions, from which all our corresponding conceptions are derived,—form a legitimate theory, being a perfect generalization of the known facts, without a single circumstance assumed. To these laws,—which require no prior union of that which suggests with that which is suggested,—the particular case which we are considering is easily referable, being one of the very cases comprehended in the generalization. The sight of a gigantic stranger brings before us the image of our diminutive friend; because, such is the nature of the mind, that in whatever manner the primary ideas may have been induced,—and though there may never have been any co-existing or immediate succession of them before,—*opposites*, by the very circumstance of their opposition, *suggest opposites*. It is as much a law of mind, that one perception or conception shall introduce, as it were, spontaneously the conception of some similar object,—or of one so dissimilar as to be contrasted with it,—or of one which formerly succeeded it,—or of one in some other way related to it,—and that it shall introduce such *relative* conceptions alone,—as it is a law of mind, that the influence of *light* on the retina, and thus indirectly on the sensorium, shall be followed by the sensation of *vision*, and not of sound; and, however mysterious and inexplicable the one process may be, it is not more inexplicable than the other. It is as little necessary to the *suggestion*, that there should be any prior union or association of ideas, as, to *vision*, that there should be any mysterious connexion of the organ with light, at some period prior to that in which light itself first acted on the organ, and the visual sensation was its consequence.

Let us next consider, whether this suggestion can be accounted for on the other supposition, which ascribes our trains of ideas to associations previous to the suggestion itself,—to laws of *association*, in short, in the sense in which that phrase is distinguishable from laws of *suggestion*.

To treat the question with all due candour, I shall make no objection to the term, *association*, as if it implied too gross an analogy to corporeal things; for, unfortunately, it has this fault only in common with almost every current phrase in the Philosophy of Mind.

If suggestion, in every case, depend on association,—that is to say, if, before objects or feelings can suggest each other, they must have been, at some former period, associated together in the mind, it is evident, that at some former period, at whatever distance of time it may have been before suggestion, both ideas or feelings must have existed together; for it would surely be absurd to speak of associations actually formed between feelings which either had not begun, or had already ceased, before the supposed association. But this supposition of *prior co-existence*, though it might explain the mutual suggestion of objects that have been contiguous, as Hume expresses it, in place or time, cannot explain the case at present under consideration, if contrast be considered as different from contiguity; for it is the very first perception of the giant which is supposed by us to induce the conception of the dwarf. It, therefore, cannot admit of being *associated* with the idea of the dwarf till it have actually *suggested* it, for, till the moment of the actual suggestion, the two ideas never have existed together; and if it have already suggested it without any former association, it is surely absurd to have recourse to a subsequent association to account for the prior suggestion, and to say, that that which is *first* in a series of changes, owes its existence to that which is *second*, and is produced by that which itself produces.

The particular case of suggestion which we have supposed, then, if contrast be truly a simple principle of suggestion, seems absolutely *decisive* of the question, because it excludes every *association* of the two ideas prior to the suggestion itself. In suggestions of objects formerly contiguous, it might have been supposed by those, who, in explaining the phenomena of our consciousness, trust more to a gratuitous hypothesis, than to the evidence of consciousness itself, that, as the perceptions originally *co-existed*, or were *immediately successive*, some mysterious connexion of those states of mind might be formed at the time of this co-existence, or immediate proximity, that might deserve to be expressed by the particular name of association,—in consequence of which connexion, the one state afterwards was to induce the other. But when there has been no such co-existence or succession,—as in the case of the first suggestions of contrast,—what association can there have been on which the suggestions may be supposed to have

depended? The association, in such a case, is manifestly nothing more than the momentary influence of the tendency of the suggestion itself; and to say that the suggestion depends on association, is the same thing as it would be to say, that suggestion depends upon suggestion. It depends, indeed, on the relation of the suggesting object to the object suggested,—as similar, opposite, contiguous in time or place, or in some other way related,—the tendency to suggest relative feelings after relative feelings, being one of the original susceptibilities of the mind, essential to its very nature,—but it depends on nothing more; and an object, therefore, the very moment of our first perception of it, may suggest some object that is related to it in one or other of these ways as readily, as after we have perceived it a thousand times; though it surely would be a very strange use of a very common term, to speak of any previous association in this case, and to say, that objects were associated before they had existence, as they must have been, if this first suggestion had depended on any prior union, or process of any kind.

That an object seen for the first time does suggest many relative conceptions, no one surely will deny; and this single consideration,—if the distinction universally made, of various principles of suggestion, be admitted,—should, of itself, have led to juster notions of our trains of thought. It appears to be absolutely decisive of the question; since, whatever might be supposed in other cases, in this case, at least, there cannot have been any previous connexion of that which suggests with that which is suggested. It proves, that the tendency of the mind, in suggestion, is not to exist successively in states which have been previously associated, but simply to exist in successive states, which have to each other certain relations, permanent or accidental,—those relations which we have considered as reducible to certain primary laws of suggestion.

That the perception of a giant, which never before had co-existed with the idea of a dwarf, should yet be sufficient, without some prior association, to induce that idea, may seem very wonderful; but wonderful as it is, it is really not more mysterious, than if the two ideas had co-existed, or succeeded each other, innumerable times. The great mystery is in the simple fact of the recurrence or spontaneous rise of any idea, without the recurrence of the external cause which produced it, and when that external cause has ceased, perhaps, to have any existence. This fact, however, we must admit, whatever be our theory; and it is all which is necessary to the one theory; while the

other, by supposing, or vaguely implying some actual union or association, prior to the suggestion, introduces a new mystery, and in consequence of the very mystery which it introduces, renders the phenomena, which it professes to explain, still more difficult to be conceived; since the association which it supposes to be necessary to the suggestion, must, on that supposition, in many cases, be the *effect* of that very suggestion to which it is supposed to give rise.

The reasons may be perceived, then, which led me to prefer the term *suggestion*, to *association*, as a more accurate general term, for all the *spontaneous successions* of our thought; since, by making the suggestion itself to depend on an association or combination of ideas prior to it, we should not merely have assumed the reality of a process, of which we have no consciousness whatever, but should have excluded, by the impossibility of such previous combination, many of the most important classes of suggestions,—every suggestion that arises from the relations of objects which we perceive for the first time, and, indeed, every suggestion that does not belong, in the strictest sense, to Mr. Hume's single class of contiguity in time.

The chief circumstance which probably led to the belief of some actual union or association of ideas, previous to suggestion, I conceive to have been the peculiar importance of that order of suggestions, of which proximity, and therefore former co-existence, or immediate succession of the direct objects of thought, are the distinguishing characteristic. If there had been no such order of suggestions as this, but conception had followed conception merely according to the other relations, such as those of analogy or contrast, we never should have thought of any association, or other prior influence, distinct from the suggestion itself. But, when objects perceived together, or in immediate succession, arise again together, or in immediate succession, as if linked by some invisible bonds, it is a very natural illusion, that the suggestion itself should seem to depend on a mysterious union of this kind. The illusion is greatly strengthened by these circumstances, that it is to the relation of direct proximity of objects, we have recourse, in all those processes of thought, which have commonly been termed recollections, or voluntary reminiscences. We think of all the variety of events that happened at the time at which we know that the same event, now forgotten by us, occurred, and we pursue this whole series, through its details, as if expecting to discover some tie that may give into our hand the fugitive feeling, which we wish to detect. The suggestion which we desire, does probably at length occur, in conse-



quence of this process ; and we are hence very naturally accustomed to look back to a period preceding the suggestion, as to the real source of the suggestion itself.

## CHAPTER VII.

### REDUCTION OF CERTAIN SUPPOSED FACULTIES TO SIMPLE SUGGESTION,

#### —I. CONCEPTION,—II. MEMORY,—III. IMAGINATION,—IV. HABIT,—

#### REFUTATION OF DR. HARTLEY'S THEORY OF ASSOCIATION.

### SECTION I.

LET us now consider some of those forms of *suggestion*, which have been ranked as distinct intellectual powers.

That which its greater simplicity leads me to consider first, is what has been termed by philosophers, the *Power of Conception*, which has been defined, *the power that enables us to form a notion of an absent object of perception, or of some previous feeling of the mind*. The definition of the supposed power is sufficiently intelligible ; but is there reason to add the power thus defined, to our other mental functions, as a distinct and peculiar faculty ?

That we have a certain mental power, or susceptibility, by which, in accordance with this definition, the perception of one object may excite the notion of some absent object, is unquestionably true. But this is the very function which is meant by the power of suggestion itself, when stripped of the illusion as to prior association ; and if the conception be separated from the suggestion, nothing will remain to constitute the power of suggestion, which is only another name for the same power. I enter for example, an apartment in my friend's house during his long absence from home ; I see his flute, or the work of some favourite author, lying on his table. The mere sight of either of these, awakes instantly my conception of my friend, though, at the moment, he might have been absent from my thought. I see him again present. If I look at the volume, I almost think that I hear him arguing strenuously for the merits of his favourite, as in those evenings of social contention, when we have brought poets and philosophers to war against poets and philosophers. If I look at the flute, I feel instantly

similar illusion. I hear him again animating it with his very touch,—breathing into it what might almost, without a metaphor, be said to be the breath of life,—and giving it, not utterance merely, but eloquence. In these cases of simple suggestion, it is said the successive mental images which constitute the notion of my friend himself, of the arguments which I again seem to hear and combat, of the melodies that so gently enchant me,—are conceptions indicating, therefore, a power of the mind from which they arise, that, in reference to the effects produced by it, may be called the *power of conception*. But, if they rise from a peculiar power of conception,—and if there be a *power of association or suggestion*, which is also concerned, how are these powers to be distinguished, and what part of the process is it which we owe to this latter power? If there were no suggestion of my friend, it is very evident that there could be no conception of my friend; and if there were no conception of him, it would be absurd to speak of a suggestion, in which nothing was suggested. Whether we use the term, *suggestion*, or *association*, in this case, is of no consequence. Nothing more can be accurately meant by either term, in reference to the example which I have used, than the tendency of my mind, after existing in the state which constitutes the perception of the flute or volume, and of the room in which I observe it, to exist immediately afterwards in that different state which constitutes the conception of my friend. The laws of suggestion or association are merely the general circumstances, according to which conceptions, or certain other feelings, arise. There is not, in any case of suggestion, both a suggestion and a conception, more than there is in any case of vision, both a vision and a sight. What one glance is to the capacity of vision, one conception is to the capacity of suggestion. We may see innumerable objects in succession; we may *conceive* innumerable objects in succession. But we see them, because we are susceptible of vision; we conceive them, because we have that susceptibility of spontaneous suggestion, by which conceptions arise after each other in regular trains.

This duplication of a single power, to account for the production of a single state of mind, appears to me a very striking example of the influence of that misconception, with respect to association, which I have occupied so much time in attempting to dissipate. If association and suggestion had been considered as exactly synonymous, implying merely the succession of one state of mind to another state of mind,—without any mysterious process of union of the two feelings prior to

the suggestion, the attention of inquirers would, in this just and simple view, have been fixed on the single moment of the suggestion itself ;—and I cannot think that any philosopher would, in this case, have contended for *two* powers, as operating together at the very same moment, in the production of the very same conception ; but that *one* capacity would have been regarded as sufficient for this one simple effect, whether it were termed, with more immediate reference to the secondary feeling that is the effect, the *power of conception*, or with more immediate reference to the primary feeling which precedes it as its cause, the *power of suggestion* or *association*. It is very different, however, when the conception,—the one simple effect produced,—is made to depend, not merely on the tendency of the mind to exist in that state, at the particular moment at which the conception arises, but on some process of association, which may have operated at a considerable interval before ; for in that case the process of association, which is supposed to have taken place at one period, must itself imply one power or function of the mind, and the actual suggestion, or rise of the conception, at an interval afterwards, some different power or function.

With respect to the supposed intellectual power of conception, then, as distinct from the intellectual power of association or suggestion, we may very safely conclude, that the belief of this is founded merely on a mistake as to the nature of association ;—that the power of suggestion and the power of conception are the same, both being only that particular susceptibility of the mind, from which, in certain circumstances, conceptions arise,—or, at least, that if the power of conception differs from the more general powers of suggestion, it differs from it only as a part differs from the whole,—as the power of taking a single step differs from the power of traversing a whole field,—the power of drawing a single breath from the general power of respiration,—the moral susceptibility by which we are capable of forming one charitable purpose from that almost divine universality of benevolence, in a whole virtuous life, to which every moment is either some exertion for good, or some wish for good, which comprehends within its sphere of action,—that has no limits but physical impossibility,—every being whom it can instruct or amend, or relieve or gladden ; and, in its sphere of generous *desire*, all that is beyond the limits of its power of benefiting.

## SECTION II.

The next supposed intellectual power, which claims our attention, is the *Power of Memory*.

Our remembrances are nothing more than conceptions united with the notion of a certain relation of time. They are conceptions of the past, felt as conceptions of the past,—that is to say, felt as having a certain relation of antecedence to our present feeling. The remembrance is not a simple but a complex state of mind ; and all which is necessary to reduce a remembrance to a mere conception, is to separate from it a part of the complexity,—that part of it which constitutes the notion of a certain relation of antecedence. We are conscious of our present feeling, whatever it may be ; for this is, in truth, only another name for our consciousness itself. The moment of present time, at which we are thus conscious, is a bright point,—ever moving, and yet, as it were, ever fixed,—which divides the darkness of the future from the twilight of the past. The present moment, then, though ever fleeting, is to us, as it were, a fixed point ; and it is a point which guides us in the most important of our measurements, in our retrospects of the past, and our hopes of the future. The particular feeling of any moment before the present, as it rises again in our mind, would be a simple conception, if we did not think of it, either immediately or indirectly, in relation to some other feeling earlier or later. It becomes a remembrance, when we combine with it this feeling of relation,—the relation which constitutes our notion of *time* ;—for time, as far as we are capable of understanding it, or rather of feeling it, is nothing more than the varieties of this felt relation, which, in reference to one of the subjects of the relation, we distinguish by the word *before*,—in reference to the other, by the word *after*. It is a relation which we feel nearly in the same manner as we feel the relation which bodies bear to each other, as co-existing in space. We say of a house, that it is two miles from a particular village, half a mile from the river, a mile from the bridge, with a feeling of relation very similar to that with which we say of one event, that it occurred a month ago,—of another event that it occurred in the memorable year of our first going to school,—of another, that it happened in our infancy. There is some *point*, to which in estimating distance of space, we refer the objects which we measure, as there is a *point of time* in the present moment, or in some event which we have before learned to consid-

er thus relatively, to which, directly or indirectly, we refer the events of which we speak as past or future, or more or less recent.

If we had been incapable of considering more than two events together, we probably never should have invented the word *time*, but should have contented ourselves with simpler words, expressive of the simple relation of the two. But we are capable of considering a variety of events, all of which are felt by us to bear to that state of mind which constitutes our present consciousness, some relation of priority or subsequence,—which they seem to us to bear also reciprocally to each other; and the varieties of this relation oblige us to invent a general term for expressing them all. This general word, invented by us for expressing all the varieties of priority and subsequence, is *time*,—a word, therefore, which expresses no actual reality, but only relations that are felt by us, in the objects of our conception. To think of time is not to think of any thing existing of itself, for time is not a thing but a relation; it is only to have some conceptions of objects, which we regard as prior and subsequent; and without the conception of objects of some kind, as subjects of the relation of priority and subsequence, it is as little possible for us to imagine any time, as to imagine brightness or dimness without a single ray of light,—proportional magnitude without any dimensions,—or any other relation without any other subject. When the notion of time, then, is combined with any of our conceptions, as in memory, all which is combined with the simple conception is the feeling of a certain relation. To be capable of remembering, in short, we must have a capacity of the feelings which we term *relations*, and a capacity of the feelings which we term *conceptions*, that may be the subjects of the relations; but with these two powers no other is requisite,—no power of memory distinct from the conception and relation which that complex form denotes.

When I say that time, as far as we are capable of understanding it, is nothing more than a certain felt relation of certain conceptions of our own mind, I am sufficiently aware of the necessity of this qualifying clause with respect to the limits of our understanding, and of the truth of the very striking remark of St. Austin on this most obscure subject, that he knew well what time was, till he was asked about it, and that then he knew nothing of it.—“*Quid ergo est tempus? Quis hoc facile explicuerit? Si nemo a me quærat, scio. Si querenti explicare velim, nescio.*”

It is truly one of those subjects, which, instead of growing clearer as we gaze upon it, grows more obscure beneath our very gaze. All of

which we can be said to be conscious, is certainly the present moment alone. But of that complex state of mind, which forms to us the present moment, there are parts which impress us irresistibly, and beyond all the power of scepticism, with the relation, which we term *priority*, in reference to the one, and *succession* or *subsequence*, in reference to the other; time, as felt by us, being this relation of the two, and nothing more. It is not because we have a previous notion of time that we regard objects as prior and posterior, more than we regard objects as large or small, because we have a previous notion of magnitude; but *time*, as a general word, is significant to us merely of the felt varieties of the relation of priority and subsequence, as *magnitude* is a general word, expressive of the felt varieties of comparative dimensions.

Obscure as the relation of priority and succession may be, however, which is all that mingles with conception in our remembrance, it is still only a certain relation; and the feeling of this relation does not imply any peculiar power, generically distinct from that which perceives other relations, whether clear or obscure. Memory, therefore, is not a distinct intellectual faculty, but is merely *conception* or *suggestion*, combined with the feeling of a particular relation. It cannot be denied, for example, that in the darkness of the night, after an interval of many years, and at the distance, probably, of many thousand miles, we have the faculty of conceiving, or of beholding again, almost with the same vividness as when we trod its steep ascent, the mountain which we have been accustomed perhaps to ascend in our boyhood, for the pleasure of looking down, from its topmost rock, with a sort of pride at the height which we had mastered. To behold mentally this eminence again, without any feeling of the relation of past time, is to have only a conception of the mountain. We cannot think of the mountain itself, however, even for a few moments, without thinking also of the scene which we have been accustomed to survey from it,—the humbler hills around, that served only to make the valley between appear lower, than we should otherwise have conceived it to be, and to make us feel still more proudly the height which we had attained,—the scattered villages,—the woods,—the streams, in various directions, mingling and resting in the motionless expanse of the lake. By comprehending gradually more of these objects in our mental view, we have widened our conception, indeed, but it is still a conception only; and we are not said to exercise any power distinct from that of conception or suggestion. Yet we cannot thus conceive the landscape as a whole,

without feeling various relations which its parts bear to each other in space, as near or distant, high or low,—the wood hanging over the village,—the spire gleaming through the trees,—the brook hurrying down to the mill, and the narrow path-way by its side. These relations, which give unity to the scene, are relations of space only, and they do not hinder our complex feeling from being denominated simply a conception. So far, then, no new power is said to be concerned. If, however, in addition to all these local relations, we introduce but a single relation of time,—the thought of the most trifling circumstance which occurred when we last ascended the same mountain, and beheld the same scene,—though this new part of the complex feeling have risen, according to the same exact laws of suggestion, as the conception of the mere scene, the conception is then instantly said to indicate a *new power*, and what was before a conception is a conception no longer. In one sense, indeed, there is truly the operation of a new power, for there is a new relation most certainly felt; and every relation felt implies a power or susceptibility in the mind of feeling this relation. But the relations of co-existence in space are not less relations than those of succession in time; and both or neither, therefore, when co-existing with our conceptions, should be said to indicate a new intellectual faculty.

The state of mind, in memory, is, as I have already said, a complex one,—a *conception* and a *feeling of relation*. But it admits of very easy analysis into these two parts, and, therefore, does not require the supposition of any new power to comprehend it, more than the complex state of mind, which results from the combination of the simple sensations of warmth and fragrance, requires the supposition of a new power to comprehend it, distinct from the separate senses to which the elementary feelings, if existing alone, would be referred. The conception, which forms one element of the remembrance, is referable to the capacity of simple suggestion, which we have been considering; the feeling of the relation of priority, which forms the other element of the remembrance, is referable, like all our other feelings of relation, to the *capacity of relative suggestion*, which we are afterwards to consider. It is merely as this relation of priority is or is not felt, that the state of mind, in which there is pictured some absent object or past feeling, has the name of a *conception* or the name of a *remembrance*.

In *simple memory*, then, it will be allowed, that conception follows conception by the ordinary laws of suggestion, as much as in those

conceptions to which we do not attach, that is to say, with which there is not combined, any notion of time. But there is a species of memory, which is said to be under our control,—that memory, combined with desire of remembering something forgotten, to which we commonly give the name of *recollection*. We *will* the existence of certain ideas, it is said, and they arise in consequence of our volition; though assuredly, to *will* any idea, is to *know* what we will, and therefore to be conscious of that very idea which we surely need not desire to know, when we already know it so well as to will its actual existence.

The contradiction implied in this direct volition of any particular idea, is, indeed, so manifest, that the assertion of such a direct power over the course of our thought, is now pretty generally abandoned. But still it is affirmed, with at least equal incongruity, that we have it in our power to will certain conceptions indirectly, and that there is, therefore, a species of memory which is not mere suggestion, but follows, in part, at least, other laws. This indirect volition, however, is only another form of that very direct volition of ideas, the absurdity of which it is introduced to obviate. Thus, if I wish to remember a piece of news which was communicated to me by a friend, it is acknowledged, indeed, that I cannot *will* the conception of this immediately and directly, since that would be to know it already; but I am said to have the power of *calling up* such ideas as I know to have co-existed with it, the place at which the news was told me, the person who told it, and various circumstances of our conversation, at the same time; and this supposed power of calling up such relative ideas, is that indirect power over our course of thought which we are said to possess. But, surely, if these ideas of the circumstances that formerly accompanied the event which I wish to remember, arise of themselves, to the mind, according to the simple course of suggestion, there is not even indirect volition in the parts of the spontaneous train; and, if they do not arise of themselves, but are separately *willed*, there is then as direct volition, and consequently as much absurdity, involved in this calling up of the person, the place, and the other accompanying circumstances, as in calling up the very conception itself, which is the object of all this search. In either case, we must be supposed to will to know that, of which the will to know it implies the knowledge. The only difference is, that instead of one direct volition, which is acknowledged or which must be acknowledged to be absurd, we have now many separate direct volitions, and have consequently multiplied the inconsistency which we wished to avoid. The true and simple theory



of the recollection is to be found in the permanence of the desire, and the natural spontaneous course of the suggestion. I do not call up the ideas of the person and the place ; but these by their relations to the desire which I feel, arise *uncalled* ; and when these have arisen, the suggestion of some part of the conversation at that place, and with that person, is a very natural effect of this mere conception of the person and of the place. If that particular part of the discourse be thus simply suggested, which I wished to remember, my object is gained, and my desire, of course, ceases ; if not, my desire still continuing, and being itself now more strongly, because more recently associated with the conceptions of the person and the place, keeps them constantly before me, till, in the variety of suggestions to which they spontaneously give rise, I either obtain, at last, the remembrance which I wish, or, by some new suggestion, am led into a new channel of thought, and forget altogether that there was any thing which I wished to remember. What is termed *voluntary recollection*, then, whether direct or indirect, is nothing more than the co-existence of some vague and indistinct desire with our simple trains of suggestion.

It is a complex feeling, or series of feelings, of which the continued desire, and a variety of successive relative conceptions, are parts ; but the co-existence of the train of conceptions, with an unsatisfied desire, though a complex state of mind, is not the exercise of any new power, distinct from the elementary powers or feelings which compose it. We have only to perform our mental analysis, as in any other complex phenomenon of the mind, and the elements instantly appear.

In estimating the power of memory, in those striking diversities of it which appear in different individuals, we are liable to err by attending chiefly to the more obvious suggestions, which arise and display themselves in the common intercourse of life. It is in this way, that a good memory, which is, in itself, so essential an accompaniment of profound and accurate judgment, has fallen into a sort of proverbial disrepute, as if unfriendly to judgment, or indicative of a defect in this nobler part of our intellectual constitution. In the cases, however, which have led to this very erroneous remark, it is not the *quantity*, if I may so express it, of the power of memory, but the peculiar *species* of it, that, by the sort of connexions which it involves, presents itself to us more readily, and seems more absurd, merely by coming thus more frequently before our view.

What we are too ready to consider exclusively as memory, is the suggestion which takes place, according to the mere relations of con-

tiguity in time and place, of the very objects themselves, without regard to the conceptions, which arise, in our trains of thought, by the same power of spontaneous suggestion, but which arise according to other relations, and which, therefore, we think of ascribing to the same simple power. It is not a good memory, in its best sense, as a rich and retentive store of conceptions, that is unfriendly to intellectual excellence, poetic or philosophic, but a memory of which the predominant tendency is to suggest objects or images which existed before, in this very order in which, as objects or images, they existed before, according to the merely imitative relations of *contiguity*. The richer the memory, and consequently the greater the number of images, that may arise to the poet, and of powers and effects, that may arise to the philosopher, the more copious, in both cases, will be the suggestions of *analogy*, which constitute poetic invention or philosophic discovery,—and the more copious the suggestions of analogy may be, the richer and more diversified, it is evident, must be the inventive power of the mind. It is the *quality* of memory, then, as suggesting objects in their old and familiar sequences of contiguity,—not the *quantity* of the store of suggestions, that is unfriendly to genius, though, as I before remarked, this very difference of quality may, to superficial observers, seem like a difference of the *quantity* of the actual power.

It is in common conversation chiefly, that we judge of the excellence of the memory of others, and that we feel our own defects of it,—and the species of relation which forms by far the most important tie of things, in ordinary discourse, is that of previous contiguity. We talk of things which happened at certain times, and in certain places; and he who remembers these best, seems to us to have the best memory, though the other more important species of suggestion, *according to analogy*, may, in his mind, be wholly unproductive, and though no greater number of images, therefore, may be stored in it, and no greater number of spontaneous suggestions arise; but on the contrary, perhaps, far fewer than in the more philosophic minds, whose admirable *inventions* and *discoveries*, as we term them, we admire, but whose supposed bad *memories*, which are in truth only different modifications of the same principle of suggestion, we lament.

The most ignorant of the vulgar, in describing a single event, pour out a number of suggestions of contiguity, which may astonish us indeed, though they are a proof, not that they remember more, but only that their prevailing suggestions take place, according to one almost exclusive relation. It is impossible to listen to a narrative of

the most simple event, by one of the common people, who are unaccustomed to pay much attention to events, but as they occur together, without being struck with a readiness of suggestion of innumerable petty circumstances, which might seem like superiority of memory, if we did not take into account the comparatively small number of their suggestions of a different class. They do not truly remember more than others, but their memory is different in *quality* from the memory of others. Suggestions arise in their minds, which do not arise in other minds; but there is at least an equal number of suggestions that arise in the minds of others, of which their minds, in the same circumstances, would be wholly unsusceptible. Yet still, to common observers, their memory will appear quick and retentive, in a peculiar and far surpassing degree. How many trifling facts, for example, does Mrs. Quickly heap together, to force upon Sir John Falstaff's remembrance, his promise of marriage. The passage is quoted by Lord Kames, as a very lively illustration of the species of recollections of a vulgar mind.

"In the minds of some persons, thoughts and circumstances crowd upon each other by the slightest connexions. I ascribe this to a bluntness in the discerning faculty; for a person who cannot accurately distinguish between a slight connexion and one that is more intimate, is equally affected by each; such a person must necessarily have a great flow of ideas, because they are introduced by any relation indifferently; and the slighter relations, being without number, furnish ideas without end. This doctrine is, in a lively manner, illustrated by Shakspeare:—

'*Falstaff*. What is the gross sum that I owe thee?

'*Hostess*. Marry, if thou wert an honest man, thyself and thy money too. Thou didst swear to me on a parcel-gilt goblet, sitting in my Dolphin-chamber, at the round table, by a sea-coal fire, on Wednesday in Whitsun-week, when the Prince broke thy head for likening him to a singing man of Windsor, thou didst swear to me then, as I was washing thy wound, to marry me, and make me my lady thy wife. Canst thou deny it? Did not Goodwife Keech, the butcher's wife, come in then, and call me Gossip Quickly? coming in to borrow a mess of vinegar; telling us she had a good dish of prawns; whereby thou didst desire to eat some; whereby I told thee they were ill for a green wound. And didst not thou, when she was gone down stairs, desire me to be no more so familiarity with such poor people, saying, that ere long they should call me madam? And didst thou not kiss

me, and bid me fetch thee thirty shillings? I put thee now to thy book oath, deny it, if thou canst.'—*Second Part, Henry IV. Act 2. Scene 2.*

"On the other hand, a man of accurate judgment cannot have a great flow of ideas; because the slighter relations, making no figure in his mind, have no power to introduce ideas. And hence it is, that accurate judgment is not friendly to declamation or copious eloquence. This reasoning is confirmed by experience; for it is a noted observation, That a great or comprehensive memory is seldom connected with a good judgment." \*

It is not from any defect of memory, as Lord Kames thinks, that fewer of the ideas, which prevail in common conversation, arise to a mind of accurate judgment; but, because the prevailing tendencies to suggestion, in such a mind, are of a species that have little relation to the dates, &c. of the occurrences that are the ordinary topics of familiar discourse. The memory differs in *quality*, not in *quantity*; or, at least, the defect of these ordinary topics is not itself a proof, that the general power of suggestion is less vigorous.

In the case of extemporary eloquence, indeed, the flow of mere words may be more copious, in him who is not accustomed to dwell on the permanent relations of objects, but on the slighter circumstances of perception and local connexion. Yet this is far from proving that the memory of such a person, which implies much more than the recurrence of verbal signs, is less comprehensive; on the contrary, there is every reason to suppose, that, unless probably in a few very extraordinary cases, which are as little to be taken into account, in a general estimate of this kind, as the form and functions of monsters in a physiological inquiry, the whole series of suggestions, of which a profound and discriminating mind is capable, is greater, upon the whole, than the number of those, which rise so readily to the mind of a superficial thinker. The great difference is, that the wealth of the one is composed merely of those smaller pieces, which are in continual request, and, therefore, brought more frequently to view,—while the abundance of the other consists chiefly in those more precious coins, which are rather deposited than carried about for current use, but which, when brought forward, exhibit a magnificence of wealth, to which the petty counters of the multitude are comparatively insignificant.

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\* Elements of Criticism, Chap. I.

## SECTION III.

The next class of phenomena, ascribed erroneously to a peculiar intellectual power, which remains to be considered, is that which comprehends the phenomena of *imagination*. We not merely perceive objects, and conceive or remember them simply as they were, but we have the power of combining them in various new assemblages,—of forming at our will, with a sort of delegated omnipotence, not a single universe merely, but a new and varied universe, with every succession of our thought. The materials of which we form them, are, indeed, materials that exist in every mind ; but they exist in every mind only as the stones exist shapelessly in the quarry, that require little more than mechanic labour to convert them into common dwellings, but that rise into palaces and temples only at the command of architectural genius.

Such are the sublime functions of imagination. But we must not conceive, merely because they are sublime, that they comprehend the whole office of imagination, or even its most important uses. It is of far more importance to mankind, as it operates in the common offices of life,—in those familiar feelings of every hour, which we never think of referring to any faculty, or of estimating their value in reference to other classes of feelings. What are all those pictures of the future, which are forever before our eyes, in the successive hopes, and fears, and designs of life, but imaginations, in which circumstances are combined that never, perhaps, in the same forms and proportions, have existed in reality, and which, very probably, are never to exist but in those very hopes and fears which we have formed ? The writer of romance gives secret motives and passions to the characters which he invents, and adds incident to incident in the long series of complicated action which he develops. What he does, we, too, are doing every hour ;—contriving events that never are to happen,—imagining motives and passions,—and thinking our little romances, of which ourselves, as may be supposed, perhaps are the primary heroes, but in the plot of which there is a sufficient complication of adventures of those whom we love, and those whom we dislike, connected with the main piece, or episodically intermingled. Our romances of real life, though founded upon facts, are, in their principal circumstances, fictions still ; and, though the fancy which they display may not be as brilliant, it is still the same in kind with that which forms and fills the history of imaginary heroes and heroines. The dullest plodder over the obscurest desk, who sums up, in the evening, his daily tables of profit and

loss, and who rises in the morning with the sole object of adding a few cyphers to that book of pounds and pence, which contains the whole annual history of his life,—even he, while he half lays down his quill to think of future prices, and future demands, or future possibilities of loss, has his visions and inspirations like the sublimest poet,—visions of a very different kind, indeed, from those to which poets are accustomed, but involving as truly the inspirations of fancy.

For these humble cases of imagination, it might perhaps be admitted, by those who are not aware how exactly they resemble in kind the sublimer examples of it, that no peculiar intellectual power different from simple suggestion is necessary. But is there not some peculiar power exerted in the splendid works of eloquence and poetic art,—in those fictions, which seem to give all the reality of nature to ideal things, or to add some new majesty or loveliness even to the very magnificence of nature itself,—and which would seem, therefore, to raise art above nature, if this very art were not one of the forms which nature itself assumes?

In these, too, if we analyze the phenomena with sufficient minuteness, we shall find results similar to those which we discovered in our analysis of the former tribes of phenomena, ascribed, in like manner, erroneously to peculiar powers.

To this analysis let us now proceed.

Imagination has been generally regarded as implying a *voluntary selection and combination of images*, for the production of compounds different from those which nature exhibits. This opinion, to whatever extent it may be true, is certainly false in part at least.

We have seen, in considering some other mental processes, that these are rendered very different in appearance by the union of *desire*;—that mere perception, in this way, becomes *attention*,—mere memory, *recollection*. A similar difference is produced by the union of the same feeling in the phenomena which we are at present considering.

Imagination, then, may be considered in two different lights; as it takes place without desire,—or, as it takes place with desire or intention. Let us consider, then, in the first place, those new complex conceptions, which, when there is no accompanying desire, arise and start, as it were, upon the mind, in its passive trains of thought.

That there is imagination, or new combination of images and feelings, unaccompanied with any desire, and consequently altogether void of selection, is as true, as that there is memory without intentional

reminiscence. In the trains of our thought, conceptions rise often simply as they have existed before ; they rise often mixed in various forms and proportions, as they never have existed before ; and in both cases equally without any desire on our part. We as little will the varying scenery of our reveries, and all the strange forms which seem to people them, as we will the conception of any one with whom we are acquainted, when it rises to us in instant suggestion, merely on reading his familiar name.

I may conceive gold, it is said,—I may conceive a mountain ; and these states of my mind, which are only faint transcripts of the past, are simple conceptions. But if I conceive a golden mountain,—which I never saw,—I must, it is said, have put together these two conceptions ; and this conception, different from any thing in nature, is, in strict language, not a mere *conception*, but an *imagination*.

Has any thing, however, taken place in this last case, different from what occurred in the two former ?

The argument, which I used in treating of voluntary reminiscence, is equally applicable in the present instance. I then showed the absurdity of supposing that we can will the existence of any particular idea ; since this would be to suppose us either to will without knowing what we willed, which is absurd,—or to know already what we willed to know, which is not less absurd. In like manner, I cannot have selected the images of gold and a mountain with the intention of forming the compound of a golden mountain ; since it is very evident, that if I willed that particular compound, I must have had the conception of a golden mountain previously to my conception of a golden mountain. The argument in this case is surely demonstrative ; and the same argument will apply equally to every other individual case that may be supposed, whether the images be few or many,—transient, or continued through the longest reveries. If we select images with the view of forming a particular compound, we must already have formed this compound ; and to select them for no purpose whatever, is, in truth, not to select at all.

But if there cannot have been any selection of images, for comparing with them the notion of a golden mountain, how happens it that the conception of this object, so different from any thing we have ever seen, should arise in the mind ?

For the solution of this supposed difficulty, I might remark, that it is far from necessary to suggestion, that there should be any complete resemblance of the object suggested to that which suggests it, or that

they should formerly have been proximate as the direct images of things existing together ; and that, on the same principle as that by which a giant suggests a pigmy, or, still more, as analogous objects suggest objects merely analogous,—a tempest, for example, the short violence of mortal tyranny, or a day of vernal sunshine, the serene benevolence of its God,—so the mere conception of a mountain of one substance or colour, may suggest the analogous conception of a mountain of gold. But, though this general tendency to analogous suggestions might seem, perhaps, sufficient to explain the whole difficulty, the true theory of this, and of every other species of complex conception, appears to depend, not on this general tendency merely, but, in a great degree also, on the fact that various conceptions, in that particular sense of co-existence or complexity, which I explained as all that can be understood in the case of mind, may exist together, forming one complex feeling, and that one part of this complexity may suggest one conception, while another part suggests a different conception, that may in like manner unite, and form one harmonizing whole. The conception of the colour of gold, for example, and the conception of a mountain, may be thus, as it were, separately suggested, by parts of some preceding group of images co-existing in the mind ; or the conception of a mountain remaining, its greenness or brownness, which are parts of the complex feeling, may, as colours, suggest various other colours, in the same way as if the conception of the form of the mountain had ceased ; the colours thus suggested by some former colour,—that of gold among the rest,—coalescing, as they arise, with the remaining conception of the projecting mass ; and all this happens, not in consequence of any selection of ours, but merely in conformity with the common laws of suggestion ; with those laws, by which, in every instance of vision, a mere sensation of colour continues to co-exist with what is in truth only an associate conception of some particular tangible form, and to blend itself, in intimate diffusion, with the conception which it has suggested,—as if the eye were itself capable of originally distinguishing convexity, concavity, and every varied form of position and magnitude.

The momentary groups of images that arise, independently of any desire or choice on our part, and arise in almost every minute, to almost every mind, constitute by far the greater number of our imaginations ; and to suppose a predetermining selection necessary to every new complex conception, would therefore be almost to annihilate imagination itself. It might leave it, indeed, to the writers of poetry



and romance, and to all who are in the habit of embellishing their conversation with the graces and the wonders of extemporary romance; but in the greater number of mankind, it would be to annihilate it wholly; since, in them, there is no intentional creation of images, but their fancy presents to them spontaneous images; or rather, to speak more accurately, since *fancy* is but a general term, expressive of the variety of these very states of the mind, their mind, in consequence of its own original susceptibilities of change, exists, of itself, successively, in those various states which constitute the feelings referred to fancy or imagination.

Such is imagination, considered, as it most frequently occurs, without any accompanying desire;—a mode of the general capacity of simple suggestion,—and nothing more. But there are, unquestionably, cases in which desire, or intention of some sort, accompanies it during the whole, or the chief part of the process; and it is of these cases chiefly that we are accustomed to think, in speaking of this supposed power. Such is the frame of the mind, in composition of every species, in prose or verse. In this state, conceptions follow each other, and new assemblages are formed. It is a continued exercise of imagination:—What, then, is the analysis of our feelings in this state of voluntary thought, when there is a desire of forming new groups of images, and new groups of images arise?

In the first place, to sit down to compose, is to have a general notion of some subject which we are about to treat, with the desire of developing it, and the expectation, or perhaps the confidence, that we shall be able to develop it more or less fully. The desire, like every other vivid feeling has a degree of permanence which our vivid feelings only possess; and, by its permanence, tends to keep the accompanying conception of the subject, which is the object of the desire, also permanent before us; and while it is thus permanent, the usual spontaneous suggestions take place; conception following conception, in rapid but relative series, and our judgment, all the time, approving and rejecting, according to those relations of fitness and unfitness to the subject, which it perceives in the parts of the train.

Such I conceive to be a faithful picture of the state or successive states of the mind, in the process of composition. It is not the exercise of a single power, but the development of various susceptibilities,—of desire,—of simple suggestion, by which conceptions rise after conceptions,—of judgment or relative suggestion, by which a feeling of relative fitness or unfitness arises, on the contemplation of the concep-

tions that have thus spontaneously presented themselves. We think of some subject,—the thought of this subject induces various conceptions related to it. We approve of some, as having a relation of fitness for our end, and disapprove of others, as unfit. We may term this complex state, or series of states, imagination or fancy,—and the term may be convenient for its brevity. But, in using it, we must not forget, that the term, however brief and simple, is still the name of a state that is complex, or of a succession of certain states; that the phenomena, comprehended under it, being the same in nature, are not rendered, by this use of a mere word, different from those to which we have already given peculiar names, expressive of them as they exist separately;—and that it is to the classes of these elementary phenomena, therefore, that we must refer the whole process of imagination in our philosophic analysis:—unless we exclude analysis altogether, and fill our mental vocabulary with as many names of powers, as there are complex affections of the mind.

The feeling of which I have spoken, as most important in fixing our trains of thought so as to allow continuous composition, is the vivid feeling of desire, co-existing with the conception of the particular subject; since this conception of the subject, which is essential to the desire itself, must exist as long as the particular desire or intention exists, and from the influence of the common laws of suggestion, cannot thus continue in the mind without inducing successively various other conceptions related to the primary subject and to each other.

There is another circumstance, however, which contributes very powerfully to keep the train of suggestion steadily related to the particular subject which we wish to consider, or at least to recall our thoughts to it, when they have wandered from it so far, as to have introduced trains of their own absolutely unconnected with our subject. This is the constant presence of the same objects of perception around us. I remarked when treating of the secondary laws of suggestion, the important influence which our conceptions have in awakening each other, according as they have been more or less recently combined; even the worst memory being able to repeat a short line of poetry, immediately after reading it, though, in a very short time, it might wholly forget it. There is then, most unquestionably, a peculiar readiness of suggestion of recent images or feelings. Accordingly, when we sit down to compose, the thought of our subject is soon associated with every object around us,—with all that we see,—with every permanent sound,—with the touch of the pen or the pencil which we hold,—with

our very tactual and muscular feelings as we sit. All these sensations, indeed, have been frequently connected with other subjects, but they more readily suggest our present subject, because they have co-existed with it more recently. When, therefore, we are led away, almost insensibly, to new trains of thought, we are rapidly brought back to these by the sight of some book which meets our eye,—of the desk or table before us,—or by some other of those sensations already mentioned. In our efforts of composition, there is a constant action of these causes,—some of which would lead us away, while others bring us back. The general laws of suggestion, would, in many cases, fill our mind with conceptions foreign to our object, and they do frequently produce this effect; but as often are we recalled, by the permanence of our desire, or, still more frequently, by the same laws of suggestion which had disturbed and distracted us,—operating now, in their connexion with the objects of sense before us, in the way already mentioned, and thus repairing the very evil to which they had given occasion.

In the creations of our fancy, it is very evident that the conceptions which arise must all have some relation to each other, or the new combinations would be mere wildness and confusion; and to the relations, according to which conceptions may arise, there is scarcely any limit. The first line of a poem, if I have previously read the poem, may suggest to me the second line, by its relation of former contiguity; it may suggest by resemblance of thought or language, some similar line of another author; it may suggest, by contrast, some of those ludicrous images which constitute *parody*; or it may suggest some image in harmony with its own subject, and some appropriate language with which to invest it, as when it suggested to its author the second line, and all the following lines of his poem. In this variety of suggestions, some of which would be called simple conceptions, or remembrances, while others would be ascribed to the inventive power of imagination, it is precisely the same principle which operates,—that principle of our mental constitution, by which one conception existing, induces of itself some other conception relating to it. In the inventive process, indeed, when it is long continued, there is this peculiarity, to distinguish it from the suggestions to which we do not give that name, that the process is accompanied with *intention*, or the desire of producing some new combination, together with the *expectation* that such a combination will arise, and with *judgment*,—as it is termed in science,—that discerns the greater or less aptness of the means that occur to us.

for that end which we have in view ; or with *taste*,—which is the name for the particular judgment in the fine arts,—that discerns, in like manner, the aptness of the new combinations which arise, for producing that end of pleasure which it is our wish to excite. But still the new suggestions, or successions of thought, in which all that is truly inventive in the process consists, is nothing more than the operation of that principle of the mind to which memory itself is reducible,—the general tendency of our conceptions to suggest, in certain circumstances, certain other conceptions related to them.

I have already shown, that, in far the greater number of imaginations,—in all those which enliven the momentary reveries, that form so large a part of our mental history of each day, though, from the constant recurrence of objects of perception, more vivid and more intimately connected with our permanent desires, they pass away, and are forgotten almost as soon as they have arisen,—in all those visions of the future, which occupy, with their own little hopes and fears, the great multitude of mankind, the combinations of fancy which arise, are far from implying any selection by that mind to which they arise, but occur to it, independent of any choice, by mere suggestion, or by the co-existence and combination of some conception as it arises, with that remaining perception or conception which suggested it, or with some other remaining conception of a complex group.

The selection, however, which we have to consider, is that which is supposed to take place in cases of imagination, where there is an undoubted desire of producing some new and splendid result.

Of this selection I may remark, in the first place, that when many images are together in our mind, we cannot combine two of them, with the view of forming a third, because this would be, in truth, to have already formed that third which we are supposed to will to form. In the second place, I may remark, that we cannot, by any direct effort of will, banish from our mind any thought which we may conceive to be incongruous to our subject, so as to retain only such as are congruous. To desire to *banish*, is, in truth, effectually to *retain* ; the very desire making the particular thought more vivid than it otherwise would have been.

We can neither combine nor separate two out of many images by a direct effort of will ; but nature, by certain principles with which our mind is endowed, forms the *separation* for us, and, consequently, the *new assemblage* which remains after the separation of the rejected parts. This it does for us, in consequence of our feeling of approba-

tion—the feeling of the congruity of certain images with the plan already conceived by us ; for this feeling of approbation, and therefore of increased interest, cannot arise and continue, without rendering more lively the conceptions to which it is attached, producing, in short, a prominence and vividness of these particular conceptions ; in consequence of which, they outlast the fainter conceptions that co-existed with them.

Of the various images that exist in the mind of the poet, in those efforts of fancy which we term *creative*, because they exhibit to us results different from any that have been before exhibited to us, he does not, then, banish by his will a single image of the confused group ; but he has already some leading conception in his mind ; he perceives the relation which certain images of the group bear to this leading conception ; and these images instantly becoming more lively, and therefore more permanent, the others gradually disappear, and leave those beautiful groups which he seems to have brought together by an effort of volition, merely because the simple laws of suggestion that have operated without any control on his part, have brought into his mind a multitude of conceptions, of which he is capable of feeling the relation of fitness or unfitness to his general plan. What is suitable remains—not because he wills it to remain, but because it is rendered more vivid by his approval and intent admiration. What is unsuitable disappears—not because he wills it to disappear—for his will would, in this case, serve only to retain it longer ; but simply because it has not attracted his admiration and attention, and therefore fades like every other faint conception. Nature is thus, to him, what she has been in every age, the only true and everlasting muse—the inspirer to whom we are indebted as much for every thing which is magnificent in human art, as for those glorious models of excellence, which in the living and inanimate scene of existing things she has presented to the admiration of the genius which she inspires.

#### SECTION IV.

The next class of phenomena which we shall notice, are those of *Habit*.

In treating of the secondary laws of suggestion, I before considered the effect of general habit, if it might be so termed, in modifying the suggestions of mere analogy. The habit which we are now to exam-

ine, however, is that in which the effects are not analogous merely, but strictly similar, in a tendency to the repetition of the same actions.

The nature of *habit* may be considered in two lights ; as it thus produces a greater tendency to certain actions, and as it occasions greater facility and excellence in those particular actions.

The first form of its influence, then, which we have to consider, is that by which it renders us more prone to actions that have been frequently repeated.

That the frequent repetition of any action increases the tendency to it, all must have experienced in innumerable cases, of little importance, perhaps, but sufficiently indicative of the influence ; and there are few probably, who have not had an opportunity of remarking in others the fatal power of habits of a very different kind. In the corruption of a great city, it is scarcely possible to look around, without perceiving some warning example of that blasting and deadening influence, before which every thing that was generous and benevolent in the heart has withered, while every thing which was noxious has flourished with more rapid maturity ;—like those plants, which can extend their roots, indeed, even in a pure soil, and fling out a few leaves amid balmy airs and odours, but which burst out in all their luxuriance, only from a soil that is fed with constant putrescency, and in an atmosphere which it is poison to inhale. It is not vice,—not cold, and insensible, and contented vice, that has never known any better feelings,—which we view with melancholy regret. It is virtue,—at least what was once virtue,—that has yielded progressively and silently to an influence scarcely perceived, till it has become the very thing which it abhorred.

To explain the influence of habit, in increasing the tendency to certain actions, I must remark, that the suggesting influence, which is usually expressed in the phrase *association of ideas*, is not limited to these more than to any other states of the mind, but occurs also with equal force in other feelings, which are not commonly termed ideas or conceptions ; that our desires, or other emotions, for example, may, like them, form a part of our trains of suggestion ; and that it is not more wonderful, therefore, that the states of the mind, which constitute certain desires, after frequently succeeding certain perceptions, should, on the mere renewal of the perceptions recur once more, than that any one conception should follow, in this manner, any other conception,—that the mere picture of a rose, for example, should suggest its fragrance ; or that verses, which we have frequently read, should rise once more successively in our memory, when the line which precedes

them has been repeated to us, or remembered by us. To him who has long yielded servilely to habits of intoxication, the mere sight, or the mere conception of the poisonous beverage,—to which he has devoted and sacrificed his health, and virtue, and happiness,—will induce, almost as if mechanically, the series of mental affections, on which the worse than animal appetite, and the muscular motions necessary for gratifying it, depend. Perhaps, at the early period of the growth of the passion, there was little love of the wine itself, the desire of which was rather a consequence of the pleasures of gay conversation that accompanied the too frequent draught. But whatever different pleasures may originally have accompanied it, the perception of the wine and the draught itself were frequent parts of the complex process; and, therefore, those particular mental states, which constituted the repeated volitions necessary for the particular muscular movements; and it is not wonderful, therefore, that *all* the parts of the process should be revived by the mere revival of a single part.

What is called the power of habit is thus suggestion, and nothing more. The sight of the wine before him has co-existed innumerable times with the desire of drinking it. The state of mind, therefore, which constitutes the perception, induces, by the common influence of suggestion, that other state of mind which constitutes the desire, and the desire all those other states or motions which have been its usual attendants.

This influence of habit, then,—in increasing the tendency to certain motions,—is not very difficult of explanation, without the necessity of having recourse to any principle of the mind distinct from that on which all our simple suggestions depend. If feelings tend to produce other feelings, in consequence of former proximity or co-existence, it would, indeed, be most wonderful if habitual tendencies were not produced. But the tendency to certain actions is not merely increased, the action itself, in cases of complicated motion, becomes easier.

In what manner is this increased facility to be explained?

If any person were to try, for the first time, any one of the wondrous feats of the circus,—vaulting, dancing on the rope, or some of the more difficult equestrian exercises,—there is very little reason to think that the individual, whatever general vigour and agility he might possess, would be successful; and if he were so singularly fortunate as to perform the feat at all, there can be no doubt that he would perform it with great labour, and comparative awkwardness. A certain series

of muscular contractions, alone, are best fitted for producing a certain series of attitudes; and though we may all have the muscles necessary for these particular attitudes, and the power of producing in them the requisite contractions, we have not,—merely from the sight or conception of a particular attitude,—a knowledge either of the particular muscles that are to be moved, or of the particular degrees of motion that may be necessary. In our first attempts, accordingly,—though we may produce a rude imitation of the motion which we wish to imitate—the imitation must still be a very rude one; because, in our ignorance of the particular muscles, and particular quantities of contraction, we contract muscles which ought to have remained at rest, and contract those which ought to be contracted only in a certain degree, in a degree either greater or less than this middle point. By frequent repetition, however, we gradually learn and remedy our mistakes; but we acquire this knowledge very slowly, because we are not acquainted with the particular parts of our muscular frame, and with the particular state of the mind, necessary for producing the motion of a single muscle separately from the others with which it is combined. The most skilful anatomist, therefore, if he were to venture to make his appearance upon a tight rope, would be in as great danger of falling as any of the mob (who might gather around him, perhaps, in sufficient time, at least, to see him fall) would be in his situation; because, though he knows the various muscles of his frame, and even might be capable of foretelling what motions of certain muscles would secure him in his perilous elevation, he yet is unacquainted with the *separate states of mind* that might instantly produce the desired limited motions of the desired muscles; since these precise states of mind never have been a part of his former consciousness.

But though our command over our separate muscles is not a command which we can exercise with instant skill, and though it is, and must be at all times, exercised by us blindly, without any accurate perception of the nice parts of the process that are going on within at our bidding, we do certainly *acquire* this gradual skill. In the long series of trials, we find what volitions have produced an effect, that resembles most the model which we have in view. At almost every repetition, either some muscle is left at rest, which was uselessly exerted before, or the degree of contraction of the same muscles is brought nearer and nearer to the desired point; till at length, having found the particular volitions which produce the desired effect, we repeat these frequently together, so that, on the general principles of suggestion,



they arise together afterwards with little risk of the interference of any awkward incongruous volition which might disturb them, and destroy the beauty of the graceful movements,—that seem now scarcely to require any effort in the performer, but to be to him what the muscular motions necessary for simple walking or running, are to us,—motions that, easy as they now seem to us all, were once learned by us as slowly, and with as many painful failures, as the more difficult species of motions which constitute their wonderful art, were learned in maturer life by the rope-dancer and the juggler.

The painfulness and labour of our first efforts, in such attempts, it must be remembered, do not arise merely from our bringing too many muscles into play, with a view of producing a certain definitive effect; but also, in a great measure, from the absolute necessity of bringing more into play than we intended, for the purpose of counteracting and remedying the evil occasioned by former excess of motion. We lose our balance, and merely in consequence of this loss of exact equilibrium, we are obliged to perform certain other actions, not directly to execute the particular movement originally intended by us, but simply to restore that equilibrium, without which it would be vain for us to attempt to execute it. All this unnecessary labour,—which is a mere waste of strength, and a painful waste of it,—is of course saved to us, when we have made sufficient progress to be able at least to keep our balance; and the desired motion thus becomes easier in two ways, both *positively*, by our nearer approximation to the exact point of contraction which constitutes the perfect attitude, and *negatively*, by the exclusion of those motions which our own awkwardness had rendered unavoidable.

We have seen, then, in what manner, in conformity with that great principle of the mind considered by us, the phenomena of our habitual actions may be explained, both in the increased tendency to such actions, and the increased facility of performing them.

## SECTION V.

I cannot quit the subject of our suggestions, without remarking the advantage which we derive from the accurate reference of these to laws of mind that operate at the time of the suggestion only, and not to any previous mysterious union of the parts of the train,—in refuting the mechanical theories of association, and of thought and passion in general, which, in some degree in all ages, but especially since the

publication of the work of Dr. Hartley, have so unfortunately seduced philosophers from the proper province of intellectual analysis, to employ themselves in fanciful comparisons of the affections of matter and mind, and at length to conceive that they had reduced all the phenomena of mind to corpuscular motions. The very use of the term *association*, has, unquestionably, in this respect, been of material disadvantage; and the opinion, which it seems to involve, of the necessity of some connecting process, prior to suggestion, some co-existence of perceptions, linked, as it were, together, by a common tie, has presented so many material analogies, that the mind which adopted it would very naturally become more ready to adopt that general materialism, which converts perception and passion, and the remembrances of these, into states of sensorial particles, more easily produced, as more frequently produced before, in the same manner as a tree bends most readily in the direction in which it has most frequently yielded to the storm. Had the attention been fixed less on the suggestions of grosser contiguity, than on the more refined suggestions of analogy or contrast, or on those which arise from the perception of objects seen for the first time,—the analogy of all the increased flexibilities of matter would have been less apt to recur, or, at least, its influence would have been greatly lessened; and the readers of many of those romances, which call themselves systems of intellectual philosophy, would have viewed with astonishment the hypotheses of sensorial motions, and currents of animal spirits, and furrows in the brain, and vibrations, and miniature vibrations, which false views of the mere time of association, in a connecting process of some sort prior to suggestion, have made them, in many cases, too ready to embrace.

Dr. Hartley, indeed, does not consider materialism as a necessary consequence of his theory. He does not say, that the *vibrations* and *vibratiuncles* of the medullary parts of the sensorium constitute the very sensations and passions, but merely that they are changes, necessary to every mental affection. Yet by adopting a supposed analogy of a particular species of motion, as common to all the intellectual functions,—and thus imposing the necessity of finding, or attempting to find, in every case, some exact correspondence of the mental phenomena, with the varieties and combinations of this particular species of motion, he has done as much to distract the attention of the intellectual inquirer, as if he had made all the phenomena to consist of this particular motion,—and without contending for materialism, or even believing in materialism, has produced this belief in the minds of

those who have adopted his general system, as effectually as if he had himself believed and contended that the soul is a cube, or a cone, or some irregular solid of many sides.

If we admit—as in sound philosophy it is impossible not to admit—the existence of *mind*, as a substance not cubical, conical, nor of many sides, regular or irregular, but one and simple, different from matter, and capable, by the affections of which it is susceptible, of existing in all those various states which constitute the whole history of our life as sentient, and intelligent, and moral beings,—though we must allow that its sense of external things, and, perhaps, some of its other susceptibilities, require certain previous sensorial changes or affections, not for constituting its feelings, but merely for giving occasion to them, as any other cause gives occasion to any other effect;—there is no reason for believing that such changes of the material organs are necessary for every feeling or affection of the mind, even as the mere occasions on which the feelings arise. Though we were to admit this necessity, however, without any reason for admitting it, and were to think ourselves obliged, therefore, to have recourse to some analogy of matter,—we must still reject the hypothesis of *vibrations*; since, of all the corporeal changes, that could be imagined, in the soft medullary matter of the brain and nerves, *vibrations* seem the least likely,—certainly, at least, the worst fitted for marking accurately the nice distinctions of things. Indeed, it has always seemed to me peculiarly wonderful that such an hypothesis should have been formed by a physician, to whom the structure of the brain and its appendages must have been familiar. If we wished to have a substance, that should damp and deaden every species of vibration, so as to prevent a single vibration from being accurately transmitted, it would not be very easy to find one better suited for this purpose, than that soft pulpy matter which is supposed by Dr. Hartley to transmit, with most exact fidelity, all the nicest divisions of infinitesimal vibrationcules.

Of the system of *vibrations* and *vibrationcules*, which has now fallen into merited disrepute, even with those who are inclined, in other respects, to hold in very high estimation the merits of Hartley, as an intellectual analyst, it is scarcely necessary to offer any serious confutation. The very primary facts of association or suggestion on which the whole of his metaphysical system is founded, have always appeared to me a sufficient confutation of that very hypothesis which is adduced to explain them; and as these are his favourite phenomena, on which he constantly insists, they may be fairly taken as the most suitable instance:

in which to examine the force of the analogy which he wishes to establish. Though the sensorium, then, were allowed to be, in almost every circumstance, the very opposite of what it is—to be finely elastic, and composed of chords, adapted in the best possible manner, for the nicest differences of vibrations; and though varieties, in the mere times of vibration of the same strings, were allowed to be sufficient for explaining all the infinite diversities of sensation; still the influence of that very association on which Hartley founds so much, would remain wholly unexplained. We may suppose, indeed, any two of these chords, from accidental simultaneous impulse, to have vibrated together; but this can be no reason, even though the accidental concurrence of vibration should have taken place one thousand times at the same moment,—that there should be any greater tendency in the second chord than there was originally, to vibrate, without a repetition of the primary impulse, in consequence of the mere vibration of the first. If the chords, or series of vibratory particles, still retain the same length and tension, the motion of the second may indeed be allowed to be producible indirectly, by an impulse given only to the first, if the strings truly harmonize; but, in this case, the motion of the second must have been produced in like manner, originally, by the first vibrations of the other, when external force was applied to it alone; and, if the two series of vibratory particles be of such a kind as not to harmonize, a thousand accidental co-existences or successions of their vibrations, cannot make them harmonize more than at first. *Association*, therefore, or *habit*, on such an hypothesis, would not be necessary to account for phenomena, which must have taken place equally by the mere laws of harmonics, without association. If the sight of a pictured rose recall to me its fragrance, or the fragrance of a rose in the dark, recall to me its form and colour, it is a proof that the sensorial chords, of which the vibrations give rise to these conceptions, are of such a length as to harmonize, and to admit, therefore, of joint vibrations from a single impulse. But, in this case, it is surely unnecessary that both the sight and smell should ever have existed before. Though I had never seen a rose, the mere smell of one in the dark should have brought before me instantly the form and colour which I never had beheld, because it should instantly have produced this particular corresponding vibration in the harmonizing strings; and, though I had never enjoyed its delightful fragrance, the mere picture of the flower, on paper or canvass, should have given me, in the very

instant, by a similar correspondence of vibration, the knowledge of its odour.

All this, it may perhaps be said, would be very true, if the vibrations, of which metaphysical physiologists speak, were meant in their common physical sense. But, if they are not used in their common physical sense, what is it that they are intended to denote? and why is not the precise difference pointed out? Nothing can be simpler than the meaning of the term *vibration*—an alternate approach and retrocession of a series of particles; and if this particular species of motion be not meant, it is certainly most absurd to employ the term, when another term could have been adopted or invented without risk of error; or at least to employ it without stating what is distinctly meant by it, as different from the other vibrations of which we are accustomed to speak. If it be not understood in its usual meaning, and if no other meaning be assigned to the term, the hypothesis, which expresses nothing that can be understood, has not even the scanty glory of being an hypothesis. The same phenomena might, with as much philosophic accuracy, be ascribed to any other fanciful term,—to the *Entelecheia* of Aristotle, or to the *Abracadabra* of the Cabalists. Indeed, they might be ascribed to either of these magnificent words with greater accuracy, because, though the words might leave us as ignorant as before, they at least would not communicate to us any notion positively false. There is certainly very little resemblance of memory to an effervescence, yet we might theorize as justly in ascribing memory to an effervescence as to a vibration, if we be allowed to understand both terms in a sense totally different from the common use, without even expressing what that different sense is; and if the followers of Hartley, in preferring *vibratiundes* to little *effervescences*, profess to understand the term *vibration* as it is commonly understood, and to apply to the phenomena of association the common laws of vibrating chords, they must previously undertake to show, that the phenomena of musical chords on which they found their hypothesis, are the reverse of what they are known to be,—that strings of such a length and tension as to harmonize, are not originally capable of receiving vibrations from the motions of each other, but communicate their vibrations mutually only after they have repeatedly been touched together,—and that musical chords of such a length and tension as to be absolutely discordant, acquire notwithstanding, when frequently touched with a bow or the finger, a tendency to harmonize, and at length vibrate together at the mere touch of one of them. Then, indeed, when the tendencies to vibratory

motion are shown to be precisely the reverse of what they are, the phenomena of suggestion might find some analogy in the phenomena of vibration ; but, knowing what we know of musical chords, it is impossible to bring their phenomena to bear, in the slightest degree, on the phenomena of association,—unless, indeed, by convincing us, that, little as we know positively of the mysterious principle of suggestion, we may at least negatively, have perfect knowledge, that it is *not* a vibration nor a vibratiuncle.

## CHAPTER VIII.

OF THE PHENOMENA OF RELATIVE SUGGESTION.—ARRANGEMENT OF THEM UNDER THE TWO ORDERS OF CO-EXISTENCE AND SUCCESSION.  
—SPECIES OF FEELINGS BELONGING TO THE FIRST ORDER.

### SECTION I.

IN treating of our intellectual states of mind in general, as one great division of the class of its *internal* affections which arise without the necessary presence of any external cause, from certain previous states or affections of the mind itself, I subdivided this very important tribe of our feelings into *two orders*,—those of *simple suggestion*, and of *relative suggestion*,—the one comprehending all our conceptions and other feelings of the past,—the other, all our feelings of relation. Having already discussed, as fully as our narrow limits will admit, the former of these orders,—pointing out, at the same time, the inaccuracy or imperfection of the analyses which have led philosophers to rank, under distinct intellectual powers, phenomena that appear, on minuter analysis, not to differ in any respect from the common phenomena of simple suggestion, I now proceed to the consideration of the order which remains.

Of the feelings which arise without any direct external cause, and which I have therefore, denominated *internal* states or affections of the mind—there are many then, as we have seen, which arise simply in

succession, in the floating imagery of our thought, without involving any notion of the relation of the preceding objects, or feelings, to each other. These, already considered, are what I have termed the phenomena of *simple suggestion*. But there is an extensive order of our feelings which involve this notion of relation, and which consist, indeed, in the mere perception of a relation of some sort. To these feelings of mere relation, as arising directly from the previous states of mind which suggest them, I have given the name of *relative suggestions*—meaning by this term very nearly what is meant by the term comparison, when the will or intention which comparison seems necessarily to imply, but which is far from necessary to the suggestions of relation, is excluded; or what is meant, at least in the more important relations, by the term *judgment*—if not used, as the term judgment often is, in vague popular language, to denote the understanding, or mental functions in general; and if not confined, as it usually is in books of logic, to the feeling of relation in a simple proposition, but extended to all the feelings of relation, in the series of propositions which constitute reasoning, since these are, in truth, only a series of feelings of the same class as that which is involved in every simple proposition. Whether the relation be of two or of many external objects, or of two or many affections of the mind, the feeling of this relation, arising in consequence of certain preceding states of mind, is what I term a *relative suggestion*; that phrase being the simplest which it is possible to employ, for expressing, without any theory, the mere fact of the rise of certain feelings of relation, after certain other feelings which precede them; and therefore, as involving no particular theory, and simply expressive of an undoubted fact, being, I conceive, the *finest* phrase, because the least liable to those erroneous conceptions, from which it is so difficult to escape, even in the technical phraseology of science.

That the *feelings of relation* are states of the mind essentially different from our simple perceptions, or conceptions of the objects that seem to us related, or from the combinations which we form of these in the complex groupings of our fancy; in short, that they are not what Condillac terms *transformed sensations*, I formerly proved, when combating the excessive simplification of that ingenious, but not very accurate philosopher. There is an original tendency or susceptibility of the mind, by which, on perceiving together different objects, we are instantly, without the intervention of any other mental process, sensible of their relation in certain respects, as truly as there is an original ten-

clency or susceptibility of the mind, by which, when external objects are present and have produced a certain affection of our sensorial organ, we are instantly affected with the primary elementary feelings of perception ; and, I may add, that, as our sensations or perceptions are of various species, so are there various species of relations ;—the number of relations, indeed, even of external things, being almost infinite, while the number of perceptions is necessarily limited by that of the objects which have the power of producing some affection of our organs of sensation.

The more numerous these relations may be, however, the more necessary does some arrangement of them become. Let us now proceed, then, to the consideration of some order, according to which their varieties may be arranged.

In discussing the objects of physical inquiry, I formerly illustrated very fully the division which I made of these objects, as relating to *space* or *time* ; or, in other words, as *co-existing* or *successive* ; our inquiry, in the one case, having regard to the elementary composition of external things ; in the other case, to their sequences, as causes and effects ; and in mind, in like manner, having regard, in the one case, to the analysis of our complex feelings ; in the other, to the mere order of succession of our feelings of every kind, considered as mental phenomena. The same great line of distinction appears to me to be the most precise which can be employed in classing our relations. They are the relations either of external objects, or of the feelings of our mind, considered without reference to time, as *co-existing* ; or considered with reference to time, as *successive*. To take an example of each kind, I feel that the one half of four is to twelve, as twelve to seventy-two ; and I feel this, merely by considering the numbers together, without any regard to time. No notion of change or succession is involved in it. The relation was, and is, and will forever be the same, as often as the numbers may be distinctly conceived and compared. I think of summer, I consider the warmth of its sky, and the profusion of flowers that seem crowding to the surface of the earth, as if hastening to meet and enjoy the temporary sunshine. I think of the cold of winter, and of our flowerless fields and frozen rivulets ; and the warmth and the cold of the different seasons, I regard as the causes of the different appearances. In this case as in the former, I feel a relation ; but it is a relation of antecedence and consequence, to which the notion of time, or change, or succession, is so essential, that without it the relation could not be felt.



It is not wonderful, indeed, that the classes of relations should be found to correspond with the objects of physical inquiry ; since the results of all physical inquiry must consist in the knowledge of these relations. To see many objects,—or, I may say even,—to see all the objects in nature, and all the elements of every object—and to remember these distinctly as individuals, without regard to their mutual relations, either in space or time—would not be to have science. To have what can be called *science*, is to know these objects, as co-existing in space, or as successive in time,—as involving certain proportions, or proximities, or resemblances, or certain aptitudes to precede or follow. Without that susceptibility of the mind, by which it has the feeling of relation, our consciousness would be as truly limited to a single point, as our body would become, were it possible to fetter it to a single atom. The feeling of the present moment would be every thing ; and all beside, from the infinitely great to the infinitely little, would be as nothing. We could not know the existence of our *Creator* ; for it is by reasoning from effects to causes, that is to say, by the feeling of the relation of antecedence and consequence, that we discover his existence, as the great cause or antecedent of all the wonders of the universe. We could not know the existence of the universe itself ; for it is by the consideration of certain successions of our feelings only, that we believe things to be external, and independent of our mind. We could not, even in memory, know the existence of our own mind, as the subject of our various feelings ; for this very knowledge implies the relation of these transient feelings to one permanent subject. We might still have had a variety of momentary feelings, indeed, but this would have been all ;—and, though we should have differed from them in our capacity of pleasure and pain, we should scarcely have been raised, in intellectual and moral dignity, above the organized beings around us, of a different class, that rise from the earth in spring, to flourish in summer, and wither at the close of autumn—and whose life is a brief chronicle of the still briefer seasons in which they rise, and flourish, and fade.

The relations of phenomena may, as I have already said, be reduced to two orders ; those of *co-existence* and *succession* ;—the former of which orders is to be considered by us in the first place.

The relations of this order, are either of objects believed to *co-exist without*, or of feelings that are considered as co-existing in one simple state of mind.

In regard to this latter species of virtual, but not absolute co-existence, there is danger of a mistake from the terms, which the poverty of our language obliges us to use;—the mistake of supposing, that the most complex states of mind are not truly, in their very essence, as much one and indivisible, as those which we term simple—the *complexity* and seeming *co-existence* which they involve, being relative to our feeling only, not to their own absolute nature. In itself, every notion, however seemingly complex, is, and must be, truly simple—being one state or affection, of one simple substance, mind. Our conception of a whole army, for example, is as truly this one mind, existing in this one state, as our conception of any of the individuals that compose an army. Our notion of the abstract numbers, eight, four, two, as truly one feeling of the mind, as our notion of simple unity. But, by the very nature or original tendency of the mind, it is impossible for us not to regard the notion of eight as involving, or having the relation of equality to two of four, four of two, eight of one; and it is in consequence merely of this feeling of the virtual equivalence of one state of mind, which we therefore term *complex*, to many other states of mind, which we term *simple*, that we are able to perceive various relations of equality, or proportion, in the complex feeling which seems to us to embrace them all in one joint conception—not in consequence of any real co-existence of separate parts in a feeling that is necessarily and essentially indivisible. It is on this virtual complexity alone that the mathematical sciences are founded; since these are only forms of expressing the relations of proportion, which we feel of one seeming part of a complex conception, to other seeming parts of that complex conception, which appear to us as if mentally separable from the rest.

Let us proceed, then, now, to the consideration of the *first* of our classes of relations,—those of which the subjects are regarded, without reference to *time*. To this order of real co-existence, as in matter, or of seeming co-existence, as in the complex phenomena of the mind, belong the relations of *position*, *resemblance*, or *difference*, *proportion*, *degree*, *comprehension*. I am aware, that some of these might, by a little refinement of analysis, be made to coincide,—that, for example, both proportion and degree might, by a little effort, be forced to find a place in that division which I have termed comprehension, or the relation of a whole to the separate parts included in it; but I am aware, at the same time, that this could not be done without an effort,—and an effort too, in some cases, of very subtle reasoning; and I prefer,

therefore, the division which I have now made, as sufficiently distinct, for every purpose of arrangement.

I look at a number of men, as they stand together. If I merely perceived each individually, or the whole as one complex group, I should not have the feeling of relation; but I remark one, and I observe who is next to him, who second, who third; who stands on the summit of a little eminence, above all the rest; who on the declivity; who on the plain beneath; that is to say, my mind exists in the states which constitute the various feelings of the relation of *position*.

I see two flowers, of the same tints and form, in my path. I fix my eye to two cliffs of corresponding outline, that hang above my head. I look at a picture, and I think of the well known face which it represents;—or I listen to a ballad, and seem almost to hear again some kindred melody, which it wakes in my remembrance. In each of these cases, if the relative suggestion take place, my mind, after existing in the states which constitute the perception, or the remembrance of the two similar objects, exists immediately in that state which constitutes the feeling of *resemblance*, as it exists in the state which constitutes the feeling of *difference*, when I think of certain circumstances, in which objects, though similar, perhaps, in other respects, have no correspondence or similarity whatever.

I think of the vertical angles formed by two straight lines, which cut one another; of the pairs of numbers, four and sixteen, five and twenty,—of the dimensions of the columns, and their bases and entablatures, in the different orders; and my mind exists immediately in that state, which constitutes the feeling of *proportion*.

I hear one voice, and then a voice which is louder. I take up some flowers, and smell first one, and then another, more or less fragrant. I remember many days of happiness, spent with friends who are far distant,—and I look forward to the day of still greater happiness, when we are to meet again. In these instances of spontaneous comparison, my mind exists in that state, which constitutes the feeling of *degree*.

I consider a house, and its different apartments,—a tree, and its branches, and stems, and foliage,—a horse, and its limbs, and trunk, and head. My mind, which had existed in the states that constituted the simple perception of these objects, begins immediately to exist in that different state, which constitutes the feeling of the relation of *parts* to one comprehensive whole.

In these varieties of relative suggestion, some one of which is all that constitutes each individual judgment, even in the longest series of

our ratiocination,—nothing more is necessary to the suggestion, or rise of the feeling of relation, than the simple previous perceptions or conceptions, between the objects of which the relation is felt to subsist. When I look at two flowers, it is not necessary that I should have formed any intentional comparison. But the similitude strikes me, before any desire of discovering resemblance can have arisen. I may, indeed, resolve to trace, as far as I am able, the resemblances of particular objects, and may study them accordingly; but this very desire presupposes, in the mind, a capacity of relative suggestion, of which it avails itself, in the same manner, as the intention of climbing a hill, or traversing a meadow, implies the power of muscular motion as a part of our physical constitution.

The first species of relation, which claims our attention, is that of *resemblance*.

When, in considering the relation of resemblance, we think only of such obvious suggestions, as those by which we feel the similarity of one mountain or lake, to another mountain or lake, or of a picture to the living features that seem in it almost to have a second life, we regard it merely as a source of additional pleasure to the mind, which, in moments that might otherwise be listless and unoccupied, is delighted and busied with a new order of feelings. Even this advantage of the relation, slight as it is, when compared with other more important advantages of it, is not to be regarded as of little value. I need not say, of how much pleasure the imitative arts, that are founded on this relation, are the source. In the most closely imitative of them all, that which gives to us the very forms of those, whose works of genius, or of virtue, have commanded or won our admiration, and transmits them from age to age, as if not life merely, but immortality, flowed in the colours of the artist's pencil; or, to speak of its still happier use, which preserves to us the lineaments of those whom we love, when separated from us either by distance or the tomb,—how many of the feelings which we should regret most to lose, would be lost but for this delightful art,—feelings that ennoble us, by giving us the wish to imitate what was noble in the moral hero or sage, on whom we gaze, or that comfort us, by the imaginary presence of those whose affection is the only thing that is dearer to us, than even our admiration of heroism and wisdom. The value of painting, will, indeed, best be felt by those who have lost, by death, a parent or much-loved friend, and who feel that they would not have lost every thing, if some pictured memorial had still remained.

In the wide variety of nature, how readily do we catch the resemblance of object to object, and scene to scene. With what pleasure do those, who have been long separated from the land of their youth, trace the slightest similarity to that familiar landscape which they never can forget. In reading the narratives of voyages of discovery, there is something which appears to me almost pathetic, in the very names given by the discoverers, to the islands, or parts of islands or continents, which they have been the first to explore. We feel how strong is that omnipresent affection, which, in spaces that have never been traversed before, at the widest distance which the limits of the globe admit, still binds to the land which gave them birth, even those to whom their country can scarcely be said to be their home, so much as the ocean which divides them from it. It is some rock, or river, or bay, or promontory, of his native shore, that, before he has given a name to the rock, or river, or bay, or promontory which he sees, has become present to the sailor's eye, and made the most dreary waste of savage sterility seem, for the moment, a part of his own populous soil of cultivation and busy happiness.

Of the influence of this suggestion on our complex emotion of beauty, I shall have an opportunity of speaking afterwards. At present it is only as a mere physical fact, illustrative of the peculiar mental susceptibility which we are considering, that I speak of the pleasure which we feel in every similarity perceived by us, in new scenes and forms, to those with which we have been intimately and happily familiar.

These immediate effects of the feeling of obvious resemblance, however, delightful as they may be, are, in their permanent effects, unimportant, when compared with the results of resemblances of a more abstract kind,—the resemblances to which we owe all classification, and, consequently, every thing which is valuable in language.

That *classification* is founded on the relation of similarity, of some sort, in the objects classed together, and could not have been formed, if the mind, in addition to its primary powers of external sense, had not possessed that secondary power, by which it invests with certain relations the objects which it perceives, is most evident. All which is strictly sensitive in the mind might have been the same as now; and the perception of a sheep might have succeeded, one thousand times, the perception of a horse, without suggesting the notion, which leads us to form the general term quadruped, or animal, inclusive of both; for the relation is truly no part of the object perceived by us, and classed as relative and correlative, each of which would be precisely the same,

in every quality which it possesses, and in every feeling which it directly excites, though the others, with which it may be classed, had no existence. It is from the laws of the mind which considers them, that the relation is derived,—not from the laws or direct qualities of the objects considered. But for our susceptibilities of those affections, or states of the mind, which constitute the feeling of similarity, all objects would have been to us, in the scholastic sense of the phrase, things singular, and all language, consequently, nothing more than the expression of individual existence. Such a language, it is very evident, would be of little service, in any respect, and of no aid to the memory, which it would oppress rather than relieve. It is the use of general terms,—that is to say, of terms founded on the feeling of resemblance, which alone gives to language its power,—enabling us to condense, in a single word, the innumerable objects, which, if we attempted to grasp them all individually in our conception, we should be as little able to comprehend, as to gather all the masses of all the planets in the narrow concavity of that hand which a few particles are sufficient to fill, and which soon sinks oppressed with the weight of the few particles that fill it.

That man can reason, without language of any kind, and consequently without general terms,—though the opposite opinion is maintained by many very eminent philosophers,—seems to me not to admit of any reasonable doubt, or if it required any proof, to be sufficiently shown, by the very invention of the language which involves these general terms, and still more sensibly by the conduct of the uneducated deaf and dumb,—to which also, the evident marks of reasoning in the other animals,—of reasoning which I cannot but think as unquestionable as the instincts that mingle with it,—may be said to furnish a very striking additional argument from analogy. But it is not less certain, that, without general terms, reasoning must be very imperfect, and scarcely worthy of the name, when compared with that noble power which language has rendered it. The art of *definition*,—which is merely the art of fixing, in a single word or phrase, the particular circumstance of agreement of various individual objects, which, in consequence of this feeling of relation, we have chosen to class together,—gives us certain fixed points of reference, both for ourselves and others, without which it would be impossible for us to know the progress which we have made,—impossible to remember accurately the results even of a single reasoning, and to apply them with profit to future analysis. Nor would knowledge be vague only,—it would, but

for general terms, be as incommunicable as vague ; for it must be remembered, that such terms form almost the whole of the great medium by which we communicate with each other. "Grammarians," says Dr. Reid, "have reduced all words to eight or nine classes, which are called parts of speech. Of these there is only one, to wit, that of nouns, wherein proper names are found. All pronouns, verbs, participles, adverbs, articles, prepositions, conjunctions, and interjections, are general words. Of nouns, all adjectives are general words, and the greater part of substantives. Every substantive that has a plural number, is a general word ; for no proper name can have a plural number, because it signifies only one individual. In all the fifteen books of Euclid's Elements," he continues, "there is not one word that is not general ; and the same may be said of many large volumes." \*

If man had no general terms, verbal language could be but of very feeble additional aid to the language of natural signs ; and, if the situation of man would be thus deplorable without the mere signs of general notions, how infinitely more so must it have been, if he had been incapable of the very notions themselves. The whole conduct of life is a perpetual practical application of the intuitive maxim, that similar antecedents will be followed by similar consequents,—which implies the necessity, in every case, of some rude classification of objects as similar. The fire which the child sees to-day, is not the fire which burnt him yesterday ; and if he were insensible of the resemblance, to the exclusion, perhaps, of many circumstances that differ, the remembrance of the effect of the fire of yesterday would be of no advantage in guarding him against similar exposure. It is in consequence of notions of little genera and species of good and evil, which he has formed *manually* long before he distinguishes them by their appropriate general terms, that the infant is enabled to avoid what would be hurtful, and thus to prolong his existence to the period at which, in applying the multitude of words in his language, in all their varieties of inflexion, he shows, that he has long been *philosophizing*, in circumstances, that seemed to indicate little more than the capacity of animal pleasure or pain, and innocent affection. What, indeed, can be more truly astonishing, than the progress which a being so very helpless, and apparently so incapable of any systematic effort, or even of the very wish which such an effort implies, makes, in so short a time, in connecting ideas and

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\* Reid on the Intellectual Powers, Essay V. c. 1.

sounds that have no relation but what is purely arbitrary, and in adapting them, with all those nice modifications of expression, according to circumstances, of which he can scarcely be thought to have any conception so distinct and accurate as the very language which he uses. "We cannot instruct them," it has been truly remarked, "without speaking to them in a language which they do not understand; and yet they learn it. Even when we speak to them, it is usually without any design of instructing them; and they learn, in like manner, of themselves, without any design of learning. We never speak to them of the rules of syntax; and they practise all these rules without knowing what they are. In a single year or two, they have formed in their heads a grammar, a dictionary, and almost a little art of rhetoric, with which they know well how to persuade and to charm us." \*—"Is it not a hard thing," say Berkeley, "that a couple of children cannot prate together of their sugar-plumbs and rattles, and the rest of their little trinkets, till they have tacked together numberless inconsistencies, and so formed in their minds abstract general ideas, and annexed them to every common name they make use of?" All this early generalization, admirable as it is, is certainly not, as he says, a *hard thing*,—for it is the result of laws of mind, as simple as the laws on which the very perception of the sugar-plumbs and rattles depended; but it is a beautiful illustration of that very principle of general nomenclature which Berkeley adduced it to disprove. If children can discover two rattles, or two sugar-plumbs to be like each other,—and the possibility of this surely no one will deny, who may not, in like manner, deny the possibility of those sensations by which they perceive a single rattle, or a single sugar-plumb; they must already have formed those abstract general notions which are said to be so hard a thing,—for this very feeling of similarity is all which constitutes the general notion,—and when the general notion of the resemblance of the two objects has arisen, it is as little wonderful that the general term rattle or sugar-plumb should be used to express it, as that any particular name should be used to express each separate inhabitant or familiar visitor of the nursery, or any other word of any other kind to express any other existing feeling.

The perception of objects,—the feeling of their resemblance in certain respects,—the invention of a name for these circumstances of felt resemblance,—what can be more truly and readily conceivable than

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\* André, p. 221.



this process ! And yet on this process, apparently so very simple, has been founded all that controversy as to *universals*, which so long distracted the schools ; and which far more wonderfully,—for the distraction of the schools by a few unintelligible words scarcely can be counted wonderful,—continues still to perplex philosophers with difficulties which themselves have made,—with difficulties which they could not even have made to themselves, if they had thought for a single moment of the nature of that feeling of the relation of similarity which we are now considering.

It surely cannot be denied, that the mind, with its other susceptibilities of feeling, has a susceptibility also of the feeling of the relation of similarity ; or, in other words, that certain objects, when we perceive or think of them together, appear to us to resemble each other in certain respects,—that, for example, in looking at a horse, a crow, a sparrow, a sheep, we perceive that the horse and sheep agree in having four legs, which the crow and sparrow have not ; and that, perceiving the horse and sheep to agree in this respect, and not the birds, we should distinguish them accordingly, and call the one set *quadrupeds*, the other *bipeds*, is as little wonderful, as that we should have given to each of these animals its individual designation. If there be that relative suggestion which constitutes the feeling of resemblance,—and what skeptic, if he analyze the process fairly, will deny this as a mere feeling, or state of mind ?—the general term may almost be said to follow of course. Yet for how many ages did this simple process perplex and agitate the schools,—which, agreeing in almost every thing that was complicated and absurd, could not agree in what was simple and just ; and could not agree in it precisely because it was too simple and just to accord with the other parts of that strange system, which, by a most absurd misnomer, was honoured with the name of philosophy. That during the prevalence of the scholastic opinions as to perception,—which were certainly far better fitted to harmonize with errors and mysteries than with simple truths,—the subject of generalization should have appeared mysterious, is not, indeed, very surprising. But I must confess, that there is nothing in the history of our science which appears to me so wonderful, as that any difficulty,—at least, any difficulty greater than every phenomenon of every kind involves,—should now be conceived to be attached to this very simple process ; and, especially, that philosophers should be so nearly unanimous in an opinion on the subject, which, though directly opposed to the prevalent error in the ancient schools, is not the less itself an error.

The process, as I have already described it, is the following :—In the first place, the perception of two or more objects ; in the second place, the feeling or notion of their resemblance, immediately subsequent to the perception ; and, lastly, the expression of this common relative feeling by a name, which is used afterwards, as a general denomination, for all those objects, the perception of which is followed by the same common feeling of resemblance. The general term, as expressing uniformly some felt relation of objects, is in this case significant of a *state of mind*, essentially distinct from those previous states of mind, which constituted the perception of the separate objects, as truly distinct from these primary perceptions as any one state of mind can be said to differ from any other state of mind. We might have perceived a sheep, a horse, an ox, successively, in endless series, and yet never have invented the term *quadruped*, as inclusive of all these animals, if we had not felt that particular relation of similarity, which the term *quadruped*, as applied to various objects, denotes. The feeling of this resemblance, in certain respects, is the true general notion, or general idea, as it has been less properly called, which the corresponding general term expresses ; and, but for this previous general notion of some circumstance of resemblance, the general term, expressive of this general notion, could as little have been invented, as the terms *green*, *yellow*, *scarlet*, could have been invented, in their present sense, by a nation of the blind.

## SECTION II.

In the view which is taken of this process of generalization, as of every other process, there may be error in two ways,—either by *adding* to the process, what forms no part of it, or by *omitting* what does truly form a part of it. Thus, if we were to say, that between the perception of a horse and sheep, and the feeling of their resemblance in a certain respect, there intervenes the presence of some external independent substance,—some universal form or species of a quadruped, distinct from our conceiving mind, which, acting on the mind, or being present with it, produces the notion of a quadruped, in the same way as the presence of the external horse or sheep produced the perception of these individually,—we should err, in the former of these ways, by introducing into the process, something of which we have no reason to suppose the existence, and which is not merely

unnecessary, but would involve the process in innumerable perplexities and apparent inconsistencies, if it did exist. This redundancy would be one species of error; but it would not less be an error, though an error of an opposite kind, were we to suppose that any part of the process does not take place,—that, for example, there is no relative suggestion, no rise in the mind of an intervening general notion of resemblance, before the invention and employment of the general term, but the mere perception of a multitude of objects, in the first place; and then, as if in instant succession, without any other intervening mental state whatever, the general names, under which whole multitudes are classed.

I have instanced these errors of supposed excess and deficiency, in the statement of the process, without alluding to any sects which have maintained them. I may now, however, remark, that the two opposite errors, which I have merely supposed, are the very errors involved in the opinions of the *Realists* and *Nominalists*, the great combatants in that most disputatious of controversies, to which I have before alluded—a controversy, which, in the strong language of John of Salisbury, even at the early period of which alone he could speak, had already employed fruitlessly more time and thought, than the whole race of the Cæsars had found necessary for acquiring and exercising the sovereignty of the world.

However absurd and almost inconceivable the belief of the substantial reality of genera and species, as separate and independent essences, may appear, on first consideration, we must not forget that it is to be viewed as a part of a great system, with which it readily harmonizes, and with which a juster view of the generalizing process would have been absolutely discordant.

While the doctrine of perception, by *species*, prevailed, it is not wonderful, that those who conceived ideas in perception, to be things distinct from the mind,—the idea of a particular horse, for example, to be something different, both from the horse itself, and from the mind which perceived it,—should have conceived also, that, in forming the notion of the comparative nature of horses in general, or quadrupeds, or animals, there must have been present, in like manner, some species distinct from the mind, which of course, could not be particular, like the sensible species, but universal, so as to correspond with the universality of the notion, and the generic term. Such, accordingly, in its great outline, was the ancient doctrine as to *universals*. I need not attempt to detail, if, indeed, it be possible now to detail them, with

any approach to accuracy, the various refinements and modifications of this general doctrine, in its transmission from the Pythagorean school, to Plato and Aristotle, and, in the later ages, to the schoolmen, his followers; all of whom, for many centuries, and by far the greater number, during the whole long reign of *entities* and *quiddities*, professed this belief of the existence of universal forms, as real, and independent of the conceptions, or other feelings of the mind itself,—the doctrine of universality *a parte rei*, as it was termed.

The sect of the Nominalists, the great opponents of the Realists, in this too memorable controversy, though some hints of a similar opinion may be traced in some of the ancient philosophers, particularly of the Stoical school, owes its origin, as a sect, to Roscelinus a native of Brittany, who, in the eleventh century, had the boldness to attack the doctrine of the universal *a parte rei*. Roscelinus was himself eminently distinguished for his acuteness in the theology and dialectics of that age, in which theology itself was little more than a species of dialectics; and, most fortunately for the furtherance of his opinions, he had the honour of ranking among his disciples, the celebrated Abelard; who was distinguished for his wonderful talents and acquirements of every sort. "To him alone," it was said in the epitaph inscribed on his tomb, "to him alone, of all mankind, lay revealed, whatever can be known to man." "Cui soli patuit scibile quicquid erat." These two eminent logicians, Roscelinus and Abelard, though differing in some slight respects, in their own *Nominalism*, coincided in rejecting wholly the *Realism*, which, till then had been the unquestioned doctrine of the schools. According to them, there was no universality *a parte rei*, nor any thing that could be called universal but the mere general terms, under which particular objects were ranked. The denial of the reality of universals, however, which was an attack on the general faith, was of course regarded as a heresy, and was probably regarded the more as an unwarrantable innovation, on account of the heresies, in opinions more strictly theological, of which both Roscelinus, and his illustrious pupil, had been convicted. Though their talents, therefore, were able to excite a powerful division in the schools, their doctrine gradually sunk beneath the orthodoxy of their opponents; till, in the fourteenth century, the authority of the sect was revived, by the genius of William Occam, an Englishman, one of the most acute polemics of his age, and the controversy, under his powerful championship, was agitated again, with double fervour. It was no longer, indeed, a mere war of words, or of censures, and ecclesiastical

penalties, but, in some measure, also, a war of nations ; the Emperor Lewis, of Bavaria, siding with Occam, and Lewis the Eleventh, of France, giving the weight of his power to the Realists. The violence on both sides was like that which usually rages only in the rancour of political faction, or the intolerance of religious persecution. Indeed, as might well be supposed, in a period, in which an accusation of heresy was one of the most powerful and triumphant arguments of logic, which nothing could meet and repel, but an argument of the same kind, religion was soon introduced into the controversy ; and both sects, though agreeing in little more, concurred, with equal devotion, in charging their opponents, with no less a sin, than the sin against the Holy Ghost.

At the Reformation, the fury of the controversy was suspended by more important interests—interests which affected equally both those who separated from the Romish Church, and those who adhered to it ; and perhaps too, in some degree, by the wider views which at that time were beginning to open in literature and general science. The question has since been a question of pure philosophy, in which there has been no attempt to interest sovereigns in wars of metaphysics, or to find new subjects for accusations of religious heresy. It has continued, however, to engage, in a very considerable degree, the attention of philosophers, whose general opinion has leaned to that of the sect of the Nominalists. In our own country, particularly, I may refer to the very eminent names of Hobbes, Berkeley, Hume, Dr. Campbell, and Mr. Stewart, who are Nominalists, in the strictest sense of that term. Indeed, the only names of authority which I can oppose to them, are those of Locke and Dr. Reid.

Locke and Reid, however, though holding opinions on this subject very different from those of the Nominalists, are not Realists—for, after the view which I have given of the peculiar opinions of that sect, it is surely unnecessary for me to add, that there are no longer any defenders of the *universal a parte rei*. There is no one now,—certainly no one worthy of the name of a philosopher, who believes that there is any external entity corresponding with the general notion of man, and distinct from all the individual men perceived by us, and from our mind itself, which has perceived them. The only opinion which can now be considered as opposed to that of the rigid Nominalists, is the opinion which I have endeavoured to exhibit, in a form more simple than that in which it is usually exhibited, stripped, as much as it was possible for me to strip it, of all that obscurity, with which a long con-

trovery of words had clouded it; and precluding, therefore, I trust, those mistakes as to the nature of our general notions or feelings of resemblance, on which alone the denial of the notions as states of mind seems to have been founded. The view which I have given, however, is, in the main, the same with the doctrine of Locke and Reid; and may, indeed, be traced far back in the controversy of universals; a considerable number of philosophers, who agreed with the stricter Nominalists in rejecting the notion of universal essences, having adopted this middle doctrine, or at least a doctrine nearly approaching it; and been distinguished accordingly, from the other parties, by the name of Conceptualists. Their joint opposition to the absurdities of Realism, however, occasioned them to be confounded with the Nominalists, from whom they differed certainly as much as from the Realists themselves; and I cannot but think, that it is merely in consequence of being thus confounded with Conceptualism, and presenting, therefore, some vague notions of more than mere general terms and particular perceptions, that the doctrine of the Nominalists has been able to obtain the assent and sanction of its illustrious modern defenders, whom I am thus almost inclined to consider as unconsciously, in thought, Conceptualists, even while they are Nominalists in argument and language. Or rather,—for the word *conception*, I confess, does not seem to me a very proper one for expressing that feeling of general resemblance which I consider as a mere feeling of relation—I almost think that some obscure glimpse of that more precise doctrine which I have now delivered, must have had a sort of truly unconscious influence on the belief of the Nominalists themselves, in that imperfect view which they present to others of the process of generalization.

Of that rigid Nominalism which involves truly no mixture of Conceptualism, or of the beliefs of those feelings of relation for which I have contended, but denies altogether the existence of that peculiar class of feelings, or states of mind, which have been denominated general notions, or general ideas, asserting the existence only of individual objects perceived, and of general terms that comprehend these, without any peculiar mental state denoted by the general term, distinct from those separate sensations or perceptions which the particular objects, comprehended under the term, might individually excite,—it seems to me that the very statement of the opinion itself is almost a sufficient confutation, since the very invention of the general term, and the extension of it to certain objects only, not to all objects, im-

plies some reason for this limitation,—some feeling of general agreement of the objects included in the class, to distinguish them from the objects not included in it, which is itself that very general notion professedly denied. As long as some general notion of circumstances of resemblance is admitted, I see very clearly how a general term may be most accurately limited ; but if this general notion be denied, I confess that I cannot discover any principle of limitation whatever. Why have certain objects been classed together, and not certain other objects, when all have been alike perceived by us ; and all, therefore, if there be nothing more than mere perception in the process, are capable of receiving any denomination which we may please to bestow on them ? Is it arbitrarily, and without any reason whatever, that we do not class a rose-bush with birds, or an elephant with fish ? and if there be any reason for these exclusions, why will not the Nominalist tell us what that reason is—in what feeling it is found—and how it can be made accordant with his system ? Must it not be that the rose-bush and a sparrow, though equally perceived by us, do not excite that general notion of resemblance which the term *bird* is invented to express—do not seem to us have those relations of a common nature, in certain respects, which lead us to class the sparrow and the ostrich, however different in other respects, as birds ; or the petty natives of our brooks and rivulets with the mighty monsters of the deep, under one general and equal denomination ? If this be the reason, there is more, in every case, than perception, and the giving of a general name ; for there is a peculiar state of mind—a general relative feeling—intervening between the perception and the invention of the term, which is the only reason that can be assigned for that very invention.

Even in professing to exclude the general notion of resemblance, however, the Nominalist unconsciously proceeds on it ; and no stronger proof can be imagined of the imperfectness of the view which his system gives of our generalizations, than the constant necessity under which we perceive him to labour, of assuming, at every stage of his argument, the existence of those very notions, or feelings of relative suggestion, against which his argument is directed. The general term, we are told, is significant of all objects of a certain kind, or a particular idea is made to represent various other ideas of the same sort ; as if the very doctrine did not necessarily exclude all notion of a kind or sort, independent of the application of the term itself. “ An idea,” says Berkeley, “ which, considered in itself, is particular, becomes general, by being made to represent or stand for all other particular ideas of

the same sort ;” and he instances this in the case of a line of any particular length,—an inch for example,—which, to a geometer, he says, becomes general, as “it represents all particular lines whatsoever ; so that what is demonstrated of it, is demonstrated of all lines, or in other words, of a line in general.” It is truly inconceivable that he should not have discovered, in this very statement that he had taken for granted the existence of general notions, the very states of mind which he denied ; since, without these, there can be no meaning in the restriction of any sign, to “*ideas of the same sort.*” If we have previously a notion of what he himself, rather inconsistently, calls a line in general, we can easily understand how the word line may be limited to ideas of one sort ; but if we have no such previous general notion, we cannot have any knowledge of the sort to which we are, notwithstanding, said to limit our term. An inch, which is certainly not the same figure as a foot or a yard, is, on the principles of Nominalism, which exclude all knowledge of the nature of lines in general, essentially different from these ; and might as well, but for that general notion of the resemblance of lines which all have, independently of the term, and previously to the term, but which Nominalism does not allow to exist, be significant of a *square*, or a *circle*, as of any other simple length. To say that it represents all particular lines whatsoever, is either to say nothing, or it is to say that certain general notions of resemblance exist truly, as a part of our consciousness, and that we are hence able to attach a meaning to the phrase, “all particular lines whatsoever ;” which we could not if a foot, a yard, or a mile, did not appear to us to resemble each other in some respect. It is in vain that Berkeley, who is aware of the objection which may be brought from the universal truths of geometry, against a system which denies every thing but particular ideas, and the signs of particular ideas, endeavours to reconcile this denial of the conception of universality, with that very universality which it denies. It is quite evident, that, if we have no general notions of squares and triangles, our demonstration of the properties of these figures never can go beyond those particular squares or triangles conceived by us in our demonstration.

In Dr. Campbell’s illustrations of the power of signs, in his very ingenious work on the Philosophy of Rhetoric, he adopts and defends this doctrine, of the general representative power of *particular ideas*,—making, of course, the same inconsistent assumption which Berkeley makes, and which every Nominalist must make, of those general notions of orders, sorts, or kinds, which his argument would lead us



to deny. "When a geometrician," says he, "makes a diagram with chalk upon a board, and from it demonstrates some property of a straight-lined figure, no spectator ever imagines, that he is demonstrating a property of nothing else but that individual white figure of five inches long, which is before him. Every one is satisfied, that he is demonstrating a property of all that order, whether more or less extensive, of which it is both an example and a sign; all the order being understood to agree with it in certain characters, however different in other respects."\* There can be no question that every one is, as Dr. Campbell says, satisfied that the demonstration extends to a whole order of figures, and the reason of this is, that the mind is capable of forming a general notion of an order of figures; for it really is not easy to be understood, how the mind should extend any demonstration to a whole order of figures, and to that order only, of which order itself, it is said to be incapable of any notion. "The mind," continues Dr. Campbell, "with the utmost facility, extends or contracts the representative power of the sign as the particular occasion requires. Thus, the same equilateral triangle will, with equal propriety, serve for the demonstration, not only of a property of all equilateral triangles, but of a property of all isosceles triangles, or even of a property of all triangles whatever."† The same diagram, does, indeed, serve this purpose, but not from any extension or contraction of the representative power of the sign according to occasion. It is because we had a general notion of the nature of triangles,—or of the common circumstances in which the figures, to which alone we give the name of triangles, agree,—before we looked at the diagram, and had this general notion, common to the whole order, in view, during the whole demonstration. "Nay, so perfectly is this matter understood," Dr. Campbell adds, "that, if the demonstrator, in any part, should recur to some property, as to the length of a side, belonging to the particular figure he hath constructed, but not essential to the kind mentioned in the proposition, and which the particular figure is solely intended to represent, every intelligent observer would instantly detect the fallacy. So entirely, for all the purposes of science, doth a particular serve for a whole species or genus."‡ But, on Dr. Campbell's principles, what is the species or genus, and how does it differ from other species or genera? Instead of the explanation, therefore, which he gives, I would rather say, so certain is it, that during the whole demonstration, or, at least, as

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\* *Philosophy of Rhetoric*, B. ii. c. 7.

† *Ibid.*

‡ *Ibid.*

often as any mention of the figures occurs, the general notion of the species or genus of figures, that is to say, of the circumstance of resemblance of these figures, has been present to the mind ; since, if it had no such general notion, it could not instantly detect the slightest circumstance which the species or genus does not include. The particular idea is said to be representative of other ideas, "that agree with it in certain characters." But what are these characters? If we do not understand what they are, we cannot, by our knowledge of them, make one idea representative of others ; and if we *do* know what the general characters are, we have already that general notion, which renders the supposed representation unnecessary.

In this case as in many other cases, I have no doubt,—notwithstanding the apparent extravagance of the paradox,—that it is because the doctrine of the Nominalists is very contrary to our feelings, we do not immediately discover it to be so. If it were nearer the truth, we should probably discover the error which it involves, much more readily. The error escapes us, because our general terms convey so immediately to our mind that common relation which they denote, that we supply, of ourselves, what is wanting in the process as described by the Nominalist,—the feeling of the circumstances of resemblance, specific or generic, that are to guide us in the application, as they led us to the invention of our terms.

The system of the Nominalists, then, I must contend, though more simple than the system of the Realists, is not, any more than that system, a faithful statement of the process of generalization. It is true, as it rejects the existence of any universal form or species, distinct from our mere feeling of general resemblance. But it is false, as it rejects the general relative feeling itself, which every general term denotes, and without which, to direct us in the extension and limitation of our terms, we should be in danger of giving the name of *triangle*, as much to a square or a circle, as to any three-sided figure. We perceive objects,—we have a feeling, or general notion of their resemblance,—we express this general notion by a general term. Such is the process of which we are conscious ; and no system, which omits any part of the process, can be a faithful picture of our consciousness.

There can be no doubt that the exact meaning of our general terms is much more distinctly conceived by us than that of our particular terms,—that we have a far clearer notion of a line, for example, than of an inch, or three-fourths of an inch,—of rectilinear angles in general, as formed by the meeting of any two straight lines in any direction,

than of an angle of sixty-five degrees, for which one particular inclination of the meeting lines is absolutely necessary, and an inclination, which only the nicest measurement can discriminate from that which forms an angle of sixty-four or of sixty-six. The general term, it is evident, in proportion as it is more and more general, involves the consideration of fewer particulars, and is, therefore, less confused; while the particular term must involve all the particulars included in the general one, with many more that distinguish the species or the individual, and that are difficult themselves to be distinguished, in consequence of the faintness of the limits in which they shadow into each other. To this it is owing that the sciences, which are most strictly demonstrative,—that is to say, the sciences, in which our notions are the clearest,—are not those which relate to particular objects, and which, consequently, involve particular conceptions and particular terms, but the sciences of *number* and *quantity*, in which every term is a general one, and every notion, therefore, which it expresses, general.

With each advance in generalizing, the general notion, or the feeling of resemblance in certain circumstances, becomes different, because the circumstances in which it is necessary that the general resemblance should be felt, are fewer, and common, therefore, to a greater number of objects; the general term, being, in every stage, applicable to the whole number of objects, as exciting, when considered together, that relative feeling of similarity, the suggesting of which is all that constitutes the variety, species, genus, order, or class.

The words *John*, *man*, *animal*, *substance*, in the progressive scale of generalization, are words which I understand, and none of which I feel to be exactly synonymous with the others, but to express either less or more, so as to admit progressively of wider applications than could be allowed at a lower point of the scale. Since they are felt, then, not to be exactly synonymous, each term, if it be understood at all, must excite in the mind a different feeling of some sort or other, and this different state of mind is nothing more than a notion of agreement in certain circumstances, more or fewer, according to the extent of the generalization.

### SECTION III.

That we have general relative feelings of the resemblances of objects, and that our general terms are significant of these, and limited.

therefore, to the particular objects which excite some common feeling of resemblance, is then, I conceive, sufficiently evident ; and yet the existence of such general notions is not merely rejected by the greater number of philosophers, but the assertion of it has been considered as a subject rather of ridicule, than of any serious confutation, as if confutation itself would have been too great an honour.

I must confess, however, that some incautious expressions of the Conceptualists, and their erroneous analysis and classification of the general feeling, did justify in part this ridicule, as they involved an appearance of inconsistency and contradiction, which a more accurate analysis of the general feeling asserted, and a very slight change of phraseology and arrangements, would have removed.

The use of the word *idea* for expressing the notion or feeling of resemblance, was, in the first place, unfortunate. *Idea*, from its etymological sense, and its common application to the conceptions of external objects, seems almost, in itself, to imply something which can be individualized and offered to the senses. The general *idea*, therefore, which we are said to form, from the consideration of the various ways in which two lines can meet one another, seems to us, as an *idea*, to be something which we must be capable of representing in a diagram, like any of the particular angles considered by us ; and what we can thus image in a diagram, must evidently be particular ; so that, if we ascribe to it properties of more than one particular angle, our reference must, on this very account, seem to involve an inconsistency or multitude of inconsistencies. The general idea of an angle, therefore, which is not a right angle, nor acute, nor obtuse, but, at once, all of these, and none of them, is to our conception, in every respect, as truly absurd, as a *whole*, which is *less* than a part of itself, or a *square*, of which the angles are together equal to four right angles, and at the same time equal to *five* such angles, and only to *three* or *two*.

Such are the inconsistencies that must always seem to flow from the use of the word *idea* in this case, as if presenting to us a particular image of what cannot be particular.

The same remark may, in a great measure, be applied to the use of the word *conception*, which also seems to individualize its object ; and which, as commonly employed to signify some fainter revival of a past feeling, may lead, and has led, to very mistaken views of the nature of our general notions. In these, according to the process described by me, there is nothing which can be said to be in any respect a conception, or fainter transcript of the past ; and, therefore,

if I were to invent a name for the opinion with respect to universals, which I hold, it would not be as a Conceptualist, but as a Notionist, or Relationist, that I should wish to be classed. The feeling of the relation of similarity is no part of the perception or conception of the separate objects which suggest it. It is a feeling of a different species, absolutely new—a relation, and nothing more; and the general term, which is not expressive of what can strictly be termed a conception, is invented only to express all that multitude of objects, which, however different in other respects, agree in exciting one common feeling of relation—the relation of a certain similarity.

The phrase, *general notion*, which is that which I have preferred, would in this case have been far more appropriate, and would have obviated that tendency to individual representation, which the word *conception*, and still more, the word *idea* produce; and consequently, all those apparent inconsistencies, which do not attend the notion of the mere feeling of agreement of various objects, but arise only from the attempt to form an individual representation of what is in itself general, and therefore, by its very nature, incapable of being individually represented.

Still more unfortunate, however, than the classing of our general notions with conceptions or ideas, was a verbal impropriety that may at first seem of little consequence,—the mere use of the indefinite article, in a case in which certainly it ought not to have been employed. It was not the mere general notion of the nature and properties of triangles, but the general idea of a triangle, of which writers on this branch of intellectual philosophy have been accustomed to speak. The influence of this improper use of the article has not before been remarked; yet I have no doubt, that it is the very circumstance which has chiefly tended to produce a denial of the general notion itself. It is a striking lesson, how much the progress of philosophy may be retarded, even by the slightest inaccuracy of language, which leads those who consider the doctrine without due attention and analysis, to ascribe to it the inconsistencies which are not in the doctrine itself, and thus to reject, as absurd, what, in another form of expression, would perhaps have appeared to them almost self-evident.

According to the view which I have given of the generalizing process, all that is truly general is, a relation that is felt by us. We have a feeling, or general notion of the circumstances of agreement of many individual objects, but not a notion of *an* object, uniting at once all the qualities of the individual objects, and yet excluding every quality.

which distinguishes each from each. This would truly be a species of Realism, still more absurd, than the old scholastic *universal a parte rei*. The general idea of a man, who is neither dark nor fair, tall nor short, fat nor thin, nor of any degree intermediate between these extremes, and yet is, at the same time, dark and fair, tall and short, fat and thin, is that of which we may very safely deny the existence; for a man must be particular, and must therefore have particular qualities, and certainly cannot have qualities that are inconsistent. But a dark and a fair man, a tall and a short man, a fat and a thin man, all agree in certain respects, or, in other words, excite in us a certain relative feeling, or notion of general resemblance; since, without a feeling of this kind, we never should have thought of classing them together under one general term.

A general idea of a man is, then, it will be allowed, an unfortunate, or, to speak more accurately, an absurd expression. But the absurdity of such an expression does not render it less absurd to deny, that we have any general notion, or relative feeling whatever, of the circumstances in which *men* agree—that general notion, which preceded the invention of the general term *man*, and without which the general term would be absolutely incapable of being limited, or applied to one set of objects more than to another.

I have already remarked, that it is only for a small number of the resemblances which we perceive in objects, that we have invented general terms. The general term, therefore, far from being essential to the generalization, is only a record of a generalization previously made. It marks what we have felt, and enables us to refer, with exactness, to this past feeling.

When I speak of our *invention* of a general term, however, I speak of what we do, in the present mature state of our language, not of what was likely to take place, in the early generalizations of savage life; for there seems to me very little reason to doubt the justness of that theory of appellatives, which is hinted, indeed, in some earlier writers, but has been particularly maintained by Condillac and Dr. Smith,—a theory, which supposes the words now used as appellatives, to have been originally the proper names of individual objects, extended to the objects that were perceived to be similar to those, to which the name had primarily been given. The theory is stated with great force by Dr. Smith, in the ingenious dissertation, appended to his *Theory of Moral Science*. It would be injustice to his opinion, to attempt to express it in any words but his own.

“The assignation of particular names, to denote particular objects, that is, the institution of nouns substantive, would probably be one of the first steps towards the formation of language. Two savages who had never been taught to speak, but had been bred up remote from the societies of men, would naturally begin to form that language by which they would endeavour to make their mutual wants intelligible to each other, by uttering certain sounds, whenever they meant to denote certain objects. Those objects only, which were most familiar to them, and which they had most frequent occasion to mention, would have particular names assigned to them. The particular cave whose covering sheltered them from the weather, the particular tree whose fruit relieved their hunger, the particular fountain whose water allayed their thirst, would first be denominated by the words *cave*, *tree*, *fountain*, or by whatever other appellations they might think proper, in that primitive jargon, to mark them. Afterwards, when the more enlarged experience of these savages had led them to observe, and their necessary occasions obliged them to make mention of other caves, and other trees, and other fountains, they would naturally bestow upon each of those new objects, the same name by which they had been accustomed to express the similar object they were first acquainted with. The new objects had none of them any name of its own, but each of them exactly resembled another object which had such an appellation. It was impossible that those savages could behold the new objects without recollecting the old ones; and the name of the old ones, to which the new bore so close a resemblance. When they had occasion, therefore, to mention, or to point out to each other, any of the new objects, they would naturally utter the name of the correspondent old one, of which the idea could not fail, at that instant, to present itself to their memory in the strongest and liveliest manner. And thus, those words, which were originally the proper names of individuals, would each of them insensibly become the common name of a multitude. A child that is just learning to speak, calls every person who comes to the house its papa or its mamma; and thus bestows upon the whole species those names which it had been taught to apply to two individuals. I have known a clown, who did not know the proper name of the river which ran by his own door. It was *the river*, he said, and he never heard any other name for it. His experience, it seems, had not led him to observe any other river. The general word *river*, therefore, was, it is evident, in his acceptance of it, a proper name, signifying an individual object. If this person had been

carried to another river, would he not readily have called it a river? Could we suppose any person living on the banks of the Thames so ignorant as not to know the general word *river*, but to be acquainted only with the particular word *Thames*, if he was brought to any other river, would he not readily call it a *Thames*? This, in reality, is no more than what they, who are well acquainted with the general word, are very apt to do. An Englishman, describing any great river which he may have seen in some foreign country, naturally says, that it is another Thames. The Spaniards, when they first arrived upon the coast of Mexico, and observed the wealth, populousness, and habitations of that fine country, so much superior to the savage nations which they had been visiting for some time before, cried out, that it was another Spain. Hence it was called New Spain, and this name has stuck to that unfortunate country ever since. We say, in the same manner, of a hero, that he is an Alexander; of an orator that he is a Cicero; of a philosopher, that he is a Newton. This way of speaking, which the grammarians call an *Antonomasia*, and which is still extremely common, though now not at all necessary, demonstrates how much mankind are naturally disposed to give to one object the name of any other which nearly resembles it, and thus to denominate a multitude, by what originally was intended to express an individual. "It is this application of the name of an individual to a great multitude of objects, whose resemblance naturally recalls the idea of that individual, and of the name which expresses it, that seems originally to have given occasion to the formation of those classes and assortments, which, in the schools, are called genera and species." \*

That the first designation of species and genera, by appellatives, was nothing more than this ingenious speculation supposes it to have been,—the extension of mere proper names, from similar objects to similar objects, I have very little doubt. But still it must be remembered, that the extension was from similar objects, to objects felt to be similar,—that, before the extension, therefore, there must have been a general notion of the circumstance of resemblance,—and, that, without this intermediate feeling of his mind, the savage would as little have thought of calling one tree by the name which he had previously given to another tree, as he would have thought of extending this name to the cave which sheltered him, or the fountain at which he quenched

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\* Smith's Considerations concerning the First Formation of Languages, from the beginning.



his thirst. In short, whatever our theory of the origin of general terms may be, it either must take for granted the previous existence of general relative notions, corresponding with them, or it must suppose that the terms were invented at random, without any reasons whatever, to guide us in our application or limitation of them. To state any reason of this kind, is to state some general resemblance, that is felt by us, and consequently some notion of general circumstances of resemblance, which must be independent of the general term, because it is prior to it. This which the Nominalist on reflection, I should conceive, must admit, is all for which the Conceptualist contends, or at least, is all for which I contend, in that view of the generalizing process which I have given.

Since all reasoning implies some generalization, the Nominalist, who allows nothing general but terms, is, of course, led, or forced, by his theory, to deny the possibility of reasoning of any kind, without the aid of general terms; a denial which seems to me one of the boldest, because the least consistent with the observed facts, which it is possible either for dogmatism or skepticism to make; as if the infant, long before he can be supposed to have acquired any knowledge of terms, did not form his little reasonings, on the subjects on which it is important for him to reason, as accurately probably as afterwards; but, at least, with all the accuracy which is necessary for preserving his existence, and gratifying his few feeble desires. He has, indeed, even then, gone through processes, which are admitted to involve the finest reasoning, by those very philosophers who deny him to be capable of reasoning at all. He has already calculated distances, long before he knew the use of a single word expressive of distance, and accommodated his induction to those general laws of matter, of which he knows nothing but the simple facts, and his expectation, that what has afforded him either pain or pleasure, will continue to afford him pain or pleasure. What language does the infant require, to prevent him from putting his finger twice in the flame of that candle which has burned him once? or to persuade him to stretch his hand, in exact conformity with the laws of optics, to that very point at which some bright trinket is glittering on his delighted eyes? To suppose that we cannot reason without language, seems to me, indeed, almost to involve the same inconsistency, as to say, that man is incapable of moving his limbs, till he have previously walked a mile.

The use of general terms is not to enable man to *reason*, but to enable him to reason *well*. They fix the steps of our progress,—they

give us the power of availing ourselves, with confidence, of our own past reasonings, and of the reasonings of others,—they do not absolutely prevent us from wandering, but they prevent us from wandering very far, and are marks of direction to which we can return ; without them, we should be like travellers, journeying on an immense plain, without a track, and without any points on the sky, to determine whether we were continuing to move east or west, or north or south. We should still be moving, indeed, and each step would be a progress, if it were compared merely with the step that went before. But there could be no long journey onwards ; and, after years of wandering, we might, perhaps, return to the very spot from which we set out, without even so much knowledge, as to have the slightest guess, that we were again where we had been before.

To drop this allegory, however, it is very evident, that, though we should be capable of reasoning, even without language of any sort, and of reasoning sufficient to protect ourselves from obvious and familiar causes of injury, our reasonings, in such circumstances, must be very limited, and as little comparable to the reasoning of him who enjoys the advantage of all the new distinctions of a refined language, as the creeping of the diminutive insect to the soaring of the eagle. Both animals, indeed, are capable of advancing ;—but the one passes from cloud to cloud, almost with the rapidity of the lightning, which is afterwards to flash from them, and the other takes half a day, to move over the few shrunk fibres of a withered leaf.

What must be the arithmetic of that people in South America, of whom Condamine tells us, whose whole numeration did not extend beyond three, and who had no resource afterwards, but to point first to their fingers and then to their hair ! What the reasonings of arithmetic would be to such a people, every other species of reasoning would be to us, if our general vocabulary bore no greater proportion to the feelings that were to be expressed by it, than this very limited numeral vocabulary, to all the possible combinations of numbers !

The extent of error into which we should be likely to fall, in our classifications and reasonings in general, if our language were of this very imperfect kind, it is of course, impossible for us, in our present circumstances, to guess ; though we may derive some assistance, in our estimation of these possible absurdities, from facts of which voyagers occasionally tell us. I may take for an example a fact mentioned by Captain Cook, in describing the people of Wateoo, a small island on which he lighted in his voyage from New Zealand to the Friendly

Islands. "The inhabitants," he says, "were afraid to come near our cows and horses, nor did they form the least conception of their nature. But the sheep and goats did not surpass the limits of their ideas; for they gave us to understand, that they knew them to be *birds*."—"It will appear rather incredible," he adds, "that human ignorance could ever make so strange a mistake; there not being the most distant similitude between a sheep or goat and any winged animal. But these people seemed to know nothing of the existence of any other land animals besides hogs, dogs, and birds. Our sheep and goats, they could see, were very different creatures from the two first; and, therefore they inferred that they must belong to the latter class, in which they knew that there is a considerable variety of species."—"I would add," says Mr. Stewart, who quotes this very striking fact, together with the judicious remark of Cook,—“I would add, that the mistake of these islanders, perhaps, did not arise from their considering a sheep or goat, as bearing a more striking resemblance to a bird than to the two classes of quadrupeds with which they were acquainted, but from the want of a generic word, such as *quadruped*, comprehending these two species; which men in their situation would no more be led to form, than a person who had seen only one individual of each species would think of an appellative to express both, instead of applying a proper name to each. In consequence of the variety of birds, it appears that they had a generic name comprehending all of them, to which it was not unnatural for them to refer any new animal they met with.” \*

The observation of Mr. Stewart, with respect to the influence of a generic name, on this seemingly very strange arrangement of these very rude zoologists, is ingenious and just. It must be remembered, however, in opposition to his general doctrine on the subject, that the application of the generic term, even in this very strange manner, is a proof, not that we are without general notions, but that we truly have general notions, that are independent of the mere terms which express them. It was not merely because they had a generic term that they extended this term to the unknown sheep and goats, but because the sheep and goats coincided, in some measure, with the general notion expressed by the general term. Of this the most striking evidence is contained in the very statement of Captain Cook. The cows and horses, sheep and goats, were all equally un-

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\* Stewart's Elements, Part II. Chap. iv. Sect. 1.

known to the islanders. Why, then, did they not class the cows and horses with birds as much as the goats and sheep? As far as the mere possession of a generic word could have led to this application,—if a word alone were necessary,—it was common to all the new cases alike. When all these were equally unknown, there must have been some previous general notion of certain circumstances of resemblance in birds, with which the goats and sheep coincided more exactly than the cows and horses. Nor is it very difficult to guess what this previous notion was,—the *bulk* of the different animals must have led to the distinction. The winged tribes with which they were acquainted, though they might perhaps approach, in some slight degree, to the stature of the smaller quadrupeds, could have no resemblance in this respect to the horses and cows. A bird, in their mental definition of it, was certainly a living thing, of certain various sizes familiar to them, and not a dog or a hog. A sheep, or a goat, was seen by them to be a living thing, not a dog nor a hog, and of a size that implied no remarkable opposition to that involved in their silent, mental definition of a bird. In such circumstances, it was classed by them as a bird, with as much accuracy as is to be found in many of our systematic references, even in the present improved state of science and natural history,—in that, for example, which classes and ranks under one word, the whale that swims with the man that walks; or, to use a case still more analogous, even the ant that creeps with the gnat that flies,—and, with equal accuracy, they excluded the cows and horses that did not coincide with the general notion, of which a certain resemblance of size formed an essential part. The extension of the term to the one set of quadrupeds, and the exclusion of the other set, must have had some reason; and this reason, whatever it may have been, must have been some general feeling of resemblance of some sort,—a relative suggestion, intervening between the perception of the animals, and the application of the term.

## CHAPTER IX.

## ANALYSIS OF THE PROCESS OF REASONING.

THE brief expression of the feelings of resemblance, is a general term,—but when all which we feel, in our relative suggestions of resemblance, or in any other of our relative suggestions is enunciated in language, it is termed a *proposition*, which is the expression of this common feeling of relation, and nothing more. The word *animal*, for example, is a general term, expressive of a particular relation of resemblance that is felt by us. *A horse is an animal*, is a *proposition*, which is merely a brief expression of this felt resemblance of a horse to various other creatures, included in the general term. It is the same in all the other species of relations, which we are capable of feeling. In the relation of *position*, for example, when we say that the planet Mercury is that which is next to the sun, our mere feeling of the local relation,—that particular relative suggestion which arises on the consideration of the sun, together with its planetary attendants,—by this expression of it in words, becomes what is termed in logic, a *proposition*. In the relative suggestion of degree, to say that gold is heavier than copper ;—in the relative suggestion of proportion, to say, that four are to twenty, as twenty to a hundred ;—in the relative suggestion of *comprehension*, to say, that there is a portion of heat even in the coldest snow, is to state, as a proposition, what, in the mind itself, is the mere *feeling* of a certain relation. In all such cases, it is evident, that the verbal statement of the proposition does not alter the nature of the relative suggestion, or feeling of relation, which it expresses, but simply expresses to others, a relation that must have been felt, before the proposition could be framed,—that it is not the word *animal*, for example, which produces the feeling of the general resemblance of those various beings which we have classed together under that term,—nor the word heavier, which makes us feel the greater pressure of a piece of gold, than of an equal bulk of copper,—but those feelings, previously existing, which have led to the verbal proposition that expresses to others those previous feelings.

The proposition being only an expression of a relation of some kind or other, which has been previously felt, may, of course, be as various as the species of relative suggestions of which our minds are susceptible. There may be, as we have seen, propositions of resemblance,

of order, of degree, of proportion, of comprehension,—to which last class, indeed,—that class which includes all the relations of a whole to its parts,—the others may, by a little effort of subtilty, be reduced ; since every affirmative proposition enunciates, or *predicates*—to use the technical word—some quality or attribute of a subject, which may be said to form a part of the very essence of the subject itself, or at least of our complex notion of the subject. The one quality, of which we speak, is comprehended with other qualities in that general aggregate to which we state it to belong.

On this class of our relative suggestions, therefore,—that which involves the feeling of the relation of the parts comprehended, to the *comprehending whole*,—it will be necessary to bestow a little fuller illustration, that we may understand clearly the nature of the process of reasoning—that most important of all our mental processes,—but which is in itself nothing more than a series of felt relations of this particular class in the instances which I selected before, of a house and its apartments ; a tree and its stems and foliage ; a horse and its head, and limbs, and trunk ; the relation which I have termed the relation of comprehension, or comprehensiveness, is so very obvious, that a mere allusion to it is sufficient, without any commentary. In these cases, the parts, which together form the whole, are truly substances, that admit of being separated, and can as easily be conceived to exist separately as together.

But substances are not conceived by us, only as composed of certain elementary substances, which constitute them, by their mere juxtaposition in apparent contiguity, and which may exist apart, after division. They are also conceived, as subjects of qualities, which co-exist in them, and which cannot exist apart, or, in other words—for the qualities of substances, as perceived by us, are nothing more—they are capable of affecting us as sentient beings, directly or indirectly, in various ways. A flake of snow, for example, is composed of particles of snow, which may exist separately ; and this composition of separate particles in seeming coherence is one species of *totality* ; but the same snow, without any integral division, may be considered as possessing various qualities, that is to say, as capable of affecting us variously. It is *cold*, that is to say, it excites in us a sensation of chillness ;—it is *white*, that is to say, it produces in our mind a peculiar sensation of vision, by the light which it reflects to us ;—it has *weight*—is of a certain crystalline regularity of figure—is soft or hard, according as it is more or less compressed—liquefiable at a very low temperature—and my conception of snow is of that permanent subject, which affects

my senses, in these various ways. The conglomerated flakes, in a snow-ball, are not more distinctly parts of the mass itself, which we consider, than the coldness, whiteness, gravity, regular form, softness or hardness, and ready fusibility, are felt to be parts of our complex notion of snow, as a substance.

When I think of cases, in which the relation is of a substance to parts that are themselves substances—as when I say, that a room is a part of a house, or that a tree has branches—it is quite evident, that in these very simple propositions I merely state the relation of parts to a comprehending whole. But is this statement at all different in kind, when I speak in the common forms of a proposition, of the qualities of objects, when I say, for example, that *snow is white, man capable of reasoning, the wisest of mankind still fallible*? Do I not merely state one of the many qualities, comprehended in that *totality* of qualities, which constitutes the subject as known to me? I do not, indeed, divide a mass into integral parts; but I divide a complex notion into its parts; or at least separate from that complexity, a quality which I feel to belong, and state to belong, to that whole complex notion, from which I have detached it. It is as it were a little analysis and synthesis. I decompose, and, in expressing verbally to others the mental decomposition which I have made, I combine again the separated elements of my thought—not, indeed, in the same manner, for the analytic process is as different as matter is from mind—but with the same feeling of agreement or identity, which rises in the mind of a chemist, when he has reduced to one mass the very elements into which he had previously transmuted the mass, by some one of the analyses of his wonderful art.

What, then, is reasoning—which is nothing more than a number of propositions, though of propositions consecutive in a certain order—but a continued series of analytic operations of this kind, developing the elements of our thought? In every proposition, that which is affirmed is a part of that of which it is affirmed, and the proposition, however technical in language, expresses only the single feeling of this relation. When I say *snow is white*, I state one of the many feelings which constitute my complex notion of snow. When I say *man is fallible*, I state one of the many imperfections, which, as conceived by me, together with many better qualities, constitute my complex notion of *man*. These statements of one particular relation are simple propositions, in each of which a certain analysis is involved. But when I reason, or add proposition to proposition in a certain series, I merely

prosecute my analysis, and prosecute it more or less minutely, according to the length of the ratiocination. When I say *man is fallible*, I state a quality involved in the nature of man, as any other part of an aggregate is involved in any other comprehending whole. When I add, *he may therefore err, even when he thinks himself least exposed to error*, I state what is involved in the notion of his *fallibility*. When I say, *he therefore must not expect that all men will think as he does, even on points which appear to him to have no obscurity*, I state that which is involved in the possibility of his and their erring even on such points. When I say, that *he therefore should not dare to punish those who merely differ from him, and who may be right even in differing from him*, I state what is involved in the absurdity of the expectation, that all men should think as he does. And when I say, that *any particular legislative act of intolerance is as unjust as it is absurd*, I state only what is involved in the impropriety of attempting to punish those who have no other guilt than that of differing in opinion from others, who are confessedly of a nature as fallible as their own.

In all this reasoning, though composed of many propositions, there is obviously only a *progressive analysis*, with a feeling, at each step, of the relation of parts to the whole, the predicate of each proposition being the subject of a new analysis in the proposition which follows it. *Man is fallible*. He who is fallible may err, even when he thinks himself least exposed to error. He who may be in error, even when he thinks himself safest from it, ought not to be astonished that others should think differently from him, even on points which may seem to him perfectly clear; and thus, successively, through the whole ratiocination, the predicate becomes in its turn a subject of new analysis, till we arrive at the last proposition, which is immediately extended backwards to the primary subject of analysis, *man*,—as involved in that which is itself involved in that primary complex conception, or aggregate of many qualities. There are minds, perhaps, which, merely by considering *man*, and *opinion*, and *punishment*, would discover, without an intervening proposition, that fallible man ought not to set himself up in judgment as a punisher of the speculative errors of fallible man; there are others, perhaps, who might not perceive the conclusion, without the whole series of propositions enumerated, though the conclusion is involved, as an element, in the first proposition,—*man is fallible*;—and according as the particular intellect is more or less acute, more or fewer of the intervening propositions will be necessary.



In every such case of continued intellectual analysis, it is impossible for us not to feel, when we have arrived at the conclusion, that the last proposition is as truly contained in the first, as any of the intervening propositions, though it is not seen by us, till exhibited, as it were, in its elementary state, by the repetition of analysis after analysis. It is, in this respect, precisely like the decompositions of chemical analysis, which are constantly showing us something new, in the very substances which we carry about with us, or in those which are every moment before our eyes. The air, for example, after being long considered as simple, in the sense in which chemists use the term, is afterwards shown to be composed of different gaseous fluids, nor are even these regarded as simple, but each is believed to be composed of a certain base and the matter of heat; and it is impossible to predict, or even to guess, what future analyses may be made of these elements. Yet the atmosphere, now considered as compound, is in kind, the same air which was continually flowing around the earth before this analysis; and, in the mere animal function of respiration, all mankind had, from the first moment of their infant breath, been incessantly employed, in separating into its constituent parts, the very substance which they considered as incapable of division. The *last chemist*, whose labours, when this scene of earthly things is to perish, are to close the long toils of his predecessors, will perhaps regard scarcely a single substance in nature in the same light in which we now regard it; and yet it is evident that the same terrestrial objects, which now meet our eyes, must continually have been present to his sight;—the same seasons presenting the same herbage and flowers and fruits to the same races of animals,—to which, indeed, he may have given different names, or may have detected in them new elements, or proportions of elements, but of which all his arrangement and analysis are incapable of altering the nature.

In the truths of reasoning, which a profound and penetrating genius is able in like manner to exhibit to us, we perceive a similar analysis, which presents to us, as it were, the elements of our own former conceptions; since the very reasoning, if it be at all intelligible, must begin with some conception already familiar to us, in which it asserts something to be contained, and proceeds only by tracing similar relations. A new truth, of this kind, is not so much added to us, therefore, as evolved from the primary truth already familiar; it is not as if new objects were presented to us, to be seen, but as if our intellectual senses—if I may venture to use that expression,—were quickened and rendered more acute, so as to perceive clearly what we saw dimly or

not even dimly before, though we might have seen it as now, if we had not been too dull of vision to perceive what was in our very hands. The truths at which we arrive, by repeated intellectual analysis, may be said to resemble the *premature plant*, which is to be found enclosed in that which is itself enclosed in the bulb or seed which we dissect. We must carry on our dissection, more and more minutely, to arrive at each new germ ; but we do arrive at one after the other, and when our dissection is obliged to stop, we have reason to suppose, that still finer instruments, and still finer eyes, might prosecute the discovery almost to infinity. It is the same in the discovery of the truths of reasoning. The stage, at which one inquirer stops, is not the limit of analysis, in reference to the object, but the limit of the analytic power of the individual. Inquirer after inquirer discovers truths, which were involved in truths formerly admitted by us, without our being able to perceive what was comprehended in our admission. It is not absolutely absurd to suppose, that whole sciences may be contained in propositions that now seem to us so simple as scarcely to be susceptible of further analysis, but which hereafter, when developed by some more penetrating genius, may, without any change in external nature, present to man a new field of wonder and of power. Of the possibility of this, the mathematical sciences furnish a most striking example. The rudest peasant may be said to have in his mind all, or nearly all, those primary notions, of which the sublimest demonstrations of the relations of number and quantity are the mere developement. He would be astonished, indeed, if he could be made to understand, that on notions, which appear to him of so very trifling import, have been founded some of the proudest monuments of the intellectual achievements of man, and that, among the names, to which his country and the world look with highest veneration, are the names of those whose life has been occupied in little more than in tracing all the forms of which those few conceptions, which exist in his mind as much as in theirs, are susceptible. What geometry and arithmetic are to his rude notions of numbers, and magnitudes, and proportions, some other sciences, unknown to us, indeed, at present, but not more unknown to us than geometry and arithmetic are now to him, may be, in relation to conceptions which exist, and perhaps have long existed in our mind, but which we have not yet evolved into any of their important elements. As man is quicker or slower in this internal analysis, the progress of all that philosophy, which depends on mere reasoning, is more or less rapid. There may be races of beings, or at least we can conceive

races of beings, whose senses would enable them to perceive the di-  
 mate embryo plant, enclosed in its innumerable series of preceding  
 germs; and there may perhaps be created powers of some higher  
 order, as we know that there is one Eternal Power, able to feel, in a  
 single comprehensive thought, all those truths, of which the genera-  
 tions of mankind are able, by successive analysis, to discover only a  
 few, that are, perhaps, to the great truths which they contain, only as  
 the flower which is blossoming before us, is to that infinity of future  
 blossoms enveloped in it, with which, in ever renovated beauty, it is to  
 adorn the summers of other ages.

"Lo! on each seed, within its slender rind,  
 Life's golden threads in endless circles wind;  
 Maze within maze the lucid webs are roll'd,  
 And as they burst, the living flame unfold.  
 The pulpy acorn ere it swells, contains  
 The oak's vast branches in its milky veins,  
 Each ravel'd bud, fine film, and fibre-line,  
 Traced with nice pencil on the small design.  
 The young Narcissus, in its bulb compress'd,  
 Cradles a second nestling on its breast,  
 In whose fine arms a younger embryo lies,  
 Folds its thin leaves and shuts its floret eyes;  
 Grain within grain successive harvests dwell,  
 And boundless forests slumber in a shell." \*

Such too, perhaps, are the boundless truths that may be slumbering  
 in a single comprehensive relation at present felt by us. The evolu-  
 tions of thought, however, in our processes of reasoning, though, in  
 one respect, they may be said to resemble the evolution of organic  
 germs, have this noble distinction, that, if their progress be unob-  
 structed, the progress itself is constant improvement. We have no  
 reason to believe that the earth, after the longest succession of the  
 ages during which it is to exist, will, at least without some new  
 exertion of the power of its Creator, exhibit any races of organized  
 beings different from those which it now pours out on its surface or  
 supports and feeds. But, when thought rises after thought, in intel-  
 lectual evolution, the thought which rises is not a mere copy of the  
 thought from which it rose, but a truth, which was before unknown and  
 unsuspected, that may be added to the increasing stores of human  
 wisdom, and which, in addition to its own importance, is the presage.

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\* Darwin's Botanic Garden, Canto IV. v. 381—394.

and almost the promise, of other truths which it is to evolve in like manner.

Every truth, indeed, at which we arrive, in our reasoning, becomes thus far more than doubly valuable, for the field of fresh discoveries, to which it may be opening a track,—the facility of new analysis, after each preceding analysis, increasing, as this great field opens more and more on our view, with a wider range of objects.

If the profoundest reasonings, then, be nothing more than a continued analysis of our thought, stating at every step what is contained in conceptions that previously existed, as complex feelings of our mind, it may, on first reflection, seem extraordinary, when we consider the important truths which have been thus afforded to us, that we should have been able previously to form opinions, which involve these important truths, afterwards detected in them, without having, at the time the slightest knowledge, or even the slightest suspicion, that any such truths were contained in the general notions and general phraseology which we formed. But the reason of this is sufficiently obvious, when we attend to the nature and order of the process of generalization, the results of which are the subjects of this consecutive analysis. If, indeed, we had advanced, in regular progress, from the less to the more general, from individuals to species, from species to genera, and thus gradually upward, since we should then have known previously, the minute specific circumstances involved in the higher orders and classes to which we had gradually ascended, it might have been absurd to suppose, that these specific circumstances previously known, could be discovered by analysis. The mode in which we generalize, is, however, very different. In our systematic tables, indeed, if we were to judge from these only, we might seem to have a regular advance from individuals to classes, through *species*, *genera*, *orders*. But, in the actual process of generalizing, we form classes and orders before we distinguish the minuter varieties. We are struck first with some resemblance of a multitude of objects, perhaps a very remote one, in consequence of which we class them together, and we attend afterwards to the differences which distinguish them, separating them into genera and species, according to these differences. Every general term which we use, must express, indeed, an agreement of some sort, that has led us to invent and apply the term; but we may feel one resemblance, without feeling, or even suspecting other resemblances as real,—and the very circumstance of agreement, which we perceive, at the time when we class objects together, as related, may involve, or com-

prehend, certain circumstances to which we then paid no attention, and which occur to us, only in that intellectual analysis of ratiocination, of which I spoke. It is as if we knew the situation and bearings of all the great cities in Europe, and could lay down, with most accurate precision, their longitude and latitude. To know thus much, is to know that a certain space must intervene between them, but it is not to know what that space contains. The process of reasoning, in the discoveries which it gives, is like that topographic inquiry which slowly fills up the intervals of our map, placing here a forest, there a long extent of plains, and beyond them a still longer range of mountains, till we see, at last, innumerable objects connected with each other, in that space which before presented to us only a few points of mutual bearing. The extent of space, indeed, is still precisely the same, and Paris, Vienna, and London, are to each other what they were before. The only difference is, that we know what is contained, or a part, at least, of what is contained, in the long lines that connect them.

The reasoning which proceeds from the complex to the less complex, detecting, at each stage, some unsuspected element of our thought, may be termed strictly *analytical reasoning*,—the relation, involved in each separate proposition of the series, being simply, as we have seen, the relation of parts to the whole. It is exactly the same relation, however, which is felt, in reasonings that seem to proceed in an opposite way, exhibiting to us, not the whole first, and then some element of that whole, but first the elements, and then the whole which they compose. When we say, five and eight added together make thirteen, and when we say thirteen may be divided into eight and five, we express equally the comprehension of eight and five in thirteen, which is all that is felt by us in that particular proposition. Every synthesis, therefore, as much as its corresponding analysis, since one relation alone is developed at every step, implies the same elementary consideration of a whole and its parts; the difference being merely in the order of the propositions, not in the nature of the feeling of relation, involved in any one of the separate propositions.

To this 'relation of *comprehension*, or the relation of a whole and its parts, I have said, the other relations of co-existence, in all the propositions which express them, might, in strictness of analysis, be reduced,—even that relation of proportion; which is of such importance in the reasonings of geometry and arithmetic;—so that every species of reasoning would be, in the strictest sense of the word, analytical, evolving only qualities essential to the very nature of the

subjects of the different proportions. When, therefore, in developing one of the relations of proportion, I say, four are to five as sixteen to twenty, I state a relation of the number *four*, which may regarded, as comprehended in my notion of that number, as any other quality is comprehended in any other subject.

It is one of the many properties of the number *four* that when considered together with those other numbers, five, sixteen, twenty, it impresses us with a feeling of the relation of proportion, a feeling that its proportion to five is the same as the proportion of sixteen to twenty; and it is a property, which, as soon as the relation is felt by us, it is impossible for us not to regard as essential to the number *four*,—as when we discover any new quality of a material substance, it is impossible for us not to add this quality, as another part, to our previous complex notion of the sum. We cannot, indeed, perceive this property of the number *four*, till we have considered it at the same time with the other numbers. But, as little can we know the physical qualities which form parts of our complex notion of any substance, till we have considered the substance together with other substances. For example, who could have predicted, on the mere sight of an alkaline solution, that, if mixed with oil, it would convert the oil into soap, or, if added to a vegetable infusion, would change the colour of the infusion to *green*? We must have observed these mixtures, or at least have read or heard of the effects, before we could regard the changes as effects of the presence of the alkali,—that is to say, before we could include in our complex notion of the alkali, as a substance, the qualities of forming soap with oils, and of giving a peculiar tinge to vegetable infusions. But having seen, or read, or heard of these effects, we feel that now, in our complex notion of the alkali, is included, as a part in its comprehending whole, the conception of these particular qualities. In like manner, the affinity of one metal to another, with which it admits of amalgamation, may be said to form a part of our complex notion of the metal; and it is the same with every other substance, the various properties of which, as soon as these properties are discovered by us, so as to admit of being stated to others, seem to us to be truly included in the notion of the substance itself, though before they could be so included, various other substances must have been considered at the same time. When, therefore, I say *four are to five as sixteen to twenty*, I state truly a property included in the number *four*,—the property, by which it affects us with a certain feeling of relation when considered together with certain other numbers,—though, for

discovering the property originally, and for feeling it afterwards, it was necessary that the other numbers should be considered together with it; as, when I state that mercury admits of being amalgamated with other metals, I state a property included in my complex notion of mercury, though, for originally discovering the property, and for feeling it afterwards, I must have considered the mercury together with other metals, with which I state its readiness of entering into chemical union. When I consider the same number, four, together with other numbers, I discover various other relations, as when I endeavour to form new combinations of mercury, or of other chemical substances, I discover new relations, which I add to my complex notions of the substances themselves. As my original conception of mercury becomes more complex by all the new relations which I trace, so my original conception of the number four, which seemed at first a very simple one, becomes gradually more complex, by the detection of the various relations of proportion, which are truly comprehended in it, as a subject of our thought,—as every new relation which I discover in a chemical substance, is comprehended in my widening conception of the substance itself,—and the arithmetical or geometrical proportion, like the chemical quality, may thus strictly be reduced to the general class of the relations of comprehension.

In this way, every new proportion which is traced out, in a long series of such arithmetical or geometrical propositions, may be considered as the result of a mere analysis, by which elements existing before, but unsuspected, are evolved, as in the other species of reasoning, more obviously analytic. It is evident, indeed, that the statement of any property inherent in any subject, must, in rigid accuracy of arrangement, be analytical. But, without insisting on so subtle a process, it may be easier, at least, though it should not be more accurate, to regard our reasonings of this kind, in the same manner as we formerly regarded our feelings of the simple relation of proportion, involved in each proposition of the reasoning, as forming a class apart; the reasonings we may call, in distinction from our more obvious analytic reasonings, *proportional reasonings*, as we termed the simple relative suggestions, which they involve, *relations of proportion*.

Whatever be the species of reasoning, however, it is necessary that the propositions which form the reasoning, should follow each other in a certain order, for without this order, though each proposition might involve some little analysis, and consequently some little accession of knowledge, the knowledge thus acquired must be very limited. There

could be no deduction of remote conclusions, by which the primary subject of a distant proposition might be shown, through a long succession of analyses, to have properties, which required all these various evolutions, before they could themselves be evolved to view. In the proportional reasonings of geometry, we know well, that the omission of a single proposition, or even a change of its place, might render apparently false, and almost inconceivable by us, a conclusion, which, but for such omission or change of place of a few words of the demonstration, we should have adopted instantly, with a feeling of the absolute impossibility of resisting its evidence.

How is it then, that, when order is so essential to discovery, the propositions which we form in our own silent reasoning, arrange themselves, as they rise in succession, in this necessary order; and what are we to think of that art, which, for so many ages, was held out, not so much as an auxiliary to reason, as with the still higher praise of being an instrument that might almost supply its place, by the possession of which the acute and accurate might argue still more acutely and accurately, and imbecility itself become a champion worthy of encountering them; and though not perhaps the victor, at least not always the vanquished.



## CHAPTER X.

THE ORDER OF THE PROPOSITIONS IN A RATIOCINATION, IS NOT OWING TO ANY SAGACITY—IS WHOLLY INDEPENDENT OF OUR WILL—AND TRULY DEPENDS ON THE NATURAL ORDER OF SUGGESTION.—DIVERSITY IN OPINION AMONG MANKIND UNAVOIDABLE, FROM THE VARIETY IN THEIR TRAINS OF SUGGESTION.—WHAT LOCKE TERMS *SAGACITY*, MAY BE, IN PART, PRODUCED INDIRECTLY.—DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE TRAINS OF THOUGHT THAT ARISE IN MEDITATION, AND THOSE SUBMITTED TO THE PUBLIC EYE IN A TREATISE—THERE IS A RATIONAL LOGIC.

EVERY reasoning is a series of propositions ; but every series of propositions is not reasoning ; however just the separate propositions may be,—the half of eighteen is equal to the cube of three,—*man* is liable to error,—marble is a carbonate of lime,—these propositions following each other, lead to no conclusion different from those which each separately implies and expresses. To constitute *reasoning*, it is necessary that there should be some mutual relation of the subjects and predicates of the different propositions. The order in which the different propositions arrange themselves, so as to present to us this mutual relation of the successive subjects and predicates, is therefore of the utmost importance to our consecutive analysis, in the reasonings that are strictly analytic, and to our consecutive measurements in the reasonings which I have termed proportional.

On what does this order depend ?

Let us suppose, for example, that *A* is equal to *D*,—that we are ignorant of this exact relation,—that we wish to estimate it precisely,—that we have no mode of considering them together, but that, without knowing the relation of equality of *A* to *D*, we know the relation which these bear to some other objects which may be termed intermediate—that, for example, we know *A* to be equal to *B*, which we know to be equal to the half of *C*, and that *C* is known by us to be the double of *D*. If the proportional relations, *A* is equal to *B*, which is the half of *C*, which is the double of *D*, follow each other in our mind in this order, it will be absolutely impossible for us to doubt, that *A* is exactly equal to *D*, since it is equal to that which is the half of the double of *D*. But, if any one of these relations of the intermediate objects do not arise in our mind, the relation of equality of

A to D, which is instantly and irresistibly felt by us, after the former series, will not be felt, though the series should be exactly the same in every respect, with the exception of this single proposition omitted in it. It is not enough that we may have formerly observed and measured B and C, and known their relation to D, unless B occur to us while A is in our thought; and we might thus have all the knowledge which is necessary for discovering the proportional relation of A and D, without the slightest knowledge of the proportion, or even the slightest possibility of knowing it, unless our thoughts should arrange themselves in a certain order. It is quite essential to our demonstration, that B and C should arise at certain times; and they do arise at certain times. How is it that this happens?

The common opinion on the subject, makes this order a very easy matter. We have a certain *sagacity*, it is said, by which we *find out* the intervening propositions that are so, and they are arranged in this order, because we have discovered them to be suitable for our measurement, and put them in their proper place. "Those intervening ideas, which serve to show the agreement of any two others," says Locke, "are called proofs. A quickness in the mind to find out these intermediate ideas, (that shall discover the agreement or disagreement of any other,) and to apply them rightly, is, I suppose, that which is called *sagacity*." \* And reason itself, in another part of his work, he defines to be "the faculty which finds out these means, and rightly applies them." † I need not quote the common expressions, to the same purpose, which are to be found in other writers.

That in some minds, these intervening conceptions, on which demonstration depends, do arise more readily than in others, there can be no question; and it is by a very natural and obvious metaphor, that minds, able to detect those secret relations, which are not perceived by others, to whom the same intervening conceptions have not arisen,—or have arisen without suggesting the same feeling of common relation, are said to have peculiar *sagacity*. But it is a metaphor only, and is far from solving the difficulty. The question still remains, what that process truly is, which the word *sagacity* is borrowed to denote,—whether the intermediate conceptions, that arise more readily, in certain minds, than in others, arise in consequence of any skill in discovering them, or any voluntary effort in producing them, or whether they do not

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\* Essay concerning Human Understanding, B. iv. c. ii. sect. 2.

† Ibid. B. iv. c. xvii. sect. 2.

arise in consequence of laws of suggestion, that are independent alike of our skill, and of any efforts which that skill might direct? A and D are before us, and have a relation, which is at present unknown, but a relation which would be evolved to us, if B and C were to arise to our mind. Do they then arise at our bidding? Or do they arise without being subject to our command, and without obeying it?

The mind cannot *will* the conception of B or C, however essential they may be to our reasoning; since to *will* them, implies the existence of the very conceptions which we are said to will, as states of the mind *present*, and prior to the exercise of that sagacity which is said to produce them. If B and C, therefore, rise to our thought, in the case supposed, it cannot be because we have willed them; but they must rise in consequence of laws of mind, that are independent of our volition. In short, we do not *find them out*, as Locke says, *but they come to us*; and when they have thus risen in our mind, we do not *apply* them, as he says, because we regard them as *suitable*; but the relation which is involved in them, is felt, without any intentional application, merely in consequence of their presence together in the mind. The skilful application, indeed, of which he speaks, involves an error of precisely the same kind as that which is involved in the assertion of the volition of the particular conceptions, which are said to be thus applied. It necessarily assumes the existence of the very relative feeling, for the rise of which it professes to account; since, without this previous feeling, the comparative suitableness of one medium of proof, rather than another, could not be known. The right application of fit conceptions to fit conceptions, in the choice of intermediate ideas, presupposes, then, in the very sagacity which is said to apply them rightly, a knowledge of the relation which the intermediate idea bears to the object to which it is applied,—of the very relation, for discovering which alone, it is of any consequence that the intermediate idea should be applied.

The subjects of our intervening propositions, in our trains of reasoning,—B and C, for example, by which we discover the relation of A to D, do not, then, and cannot arise in consequence of our *willing* them; since to will them, would be to have those very subjects of comparison, which we will to exist, already present to our mind, which wills them; and to will them, with peculiar sagacity, on account of their fitness as subjects of comparison, would be to have already felt that relation, for the mere purpose of discovering which, they are said

to be willed. Though arising in conformity with our general desire, then, they do not arise in consequence of any particular volitions ; and yet they arise, and arise in the very order that is necessary for developing the remote relation. The whole seeming mystery of this order, in the propositions which form our longest processes of reasoning, depends on the regularity of the laws, which guide our simple suggestions, in the phenomena of mere association formerly considered by us. Our various conceptions, in our trains of thought, we found, do not follow each other loosely, but according to certain relations. It is not wonderful, therefore, that A should suggest B, which is related to it,—B C,—C D. All this might take place by simple suggestion, though no relation were felt, and consequently no proposition or verbal statement of relation framed. But, it is not a train of simple suggestions only which the laws of mind evolve. We are susceptible of the feeling of relation of parts of the train, as much as of the conceptions themselves ; and when A has excited the relative conception of B, it is not wonderful that we should feel the relation of A and B ; or, when C is excited, the relation of B and C, more than that any other feeling of our mind should arise in its ordinary circumstances,—that we should hear the sound of a cannon, in consequence of the vibration of a few invisible particles of air, or see the flash which precedes it, in consequence of some slight affection of our visual nerves.

The *sugacity* of which Locke and other writers speak, may, then, since it is nothing more than a form of our simple suggestion itself, be reduced to that peculiar tendency of the suggesting principle, varying in different minds, of which I before treated, when considering the Secondary Laws of Suggestion, in their relation to Original Genius. The same objects do not suggest to all the same objects, even where past observation and experience may have been the same ; because the peculiar suggestions of the objects, the relations of which are afterwards felt, depend in a great measure, on constitutional tendencies, varying in different individuals, and, in a great measure, also, on tendencies modified by long habit ; and, therefore, varying in different individuals, as these habits may have been different. To some minds,—the common minds, which, in the great multitudes of our race, think what others have thought, as they do what others have done,—the conceptions which form their trains of memory, that scarcely can be called trains of reflection, rise, as we have seen, according to the relation of mere contiguity, or former proximity in time, of the related images. The conceptions of minds of a higher order, rise in almost

infinite variety, because they rise according to a relation which does not depend on former co-existence of the very images themselves, but is itself almost infinitely various.

It is this tendency of our suggestions, to rise according to the relation of analogy, which gives inventive vigour to our reasoning, as it gives richness and novelty to our products of mere imagination. By continually presenting to us new objects in succession, it of course presents to us new relations, and leads the philosophic genius from the simplest perceptions of objects, which the dullest of mankind equally behold, but in which the objects themselves are all which they see, to those sublime relations of universal nature, which bind every thing to every thing, in the whole infinity of worlds, and of which the knowledge of the immensity, is scarcely so wonderful as the apparent insignificance of the means by which the knowledge has been acquired.

Since the tendencies to suggestion are various, in different minds, the conceptions, which rise according to those tendencies, are of course various; and with the order of our conceptions that are felt to be related, the relations which we feel must vary. There may, indeed, be the same conclusion formed, when the intervening conceptions, in the trains of reflection of different individuals, have been different. But it is much more likely, that, when these intervening conceptions, of which the relations are felt, have been different, the conclusion, or ultimate relation which results from the whole, should itself be different; and that men should not agree in opinion, seems, therefore, to be almost a part of the very laws of intellect, on which the simplest phenomena of thought depend. Even by the same individual, what opposite conclusions are formed on the same subjects, in different circumstances of health and happiness, or of disease and misfortune,—and conclusions which are drawn, with the same logical justness from the premises, in one case, as in the other. The process of reasoning, which is only the continued feeling of the relations of the conceptions that have risen by the common laws of suggestion, is equally accurate; but, though the reasoning itself may have been as accurate, the conceptions of which the successive relations have been felt, during the process of reasoning, were different, in consequence of the tendency of the mind in these different states, to suggest different and almost opposite images. This tendency to form, under slight changes of circumstances, opposite conclusions, on the same subjects, is happily illustrated by Chaulieu, the French poet, in some verses, in which he considers himself as viewing nature during a fit of the gout, and of

course seeing nothing in it but what is dreadful ; when he is surprised to find different views breaking upon him of beauty in the universe, and benevolence in its Author, and discovers that the change has arisen, not from any greater brightness of the sky, or from any happier objects that surround him, but from the mere cessation of that paroxysm, which had shed, while it lasted, its own darkness on the scene. It is almost as little possible for him, whose train of conceptions is uniformly gloomy, to look upon nature, or, I may say, even upon the God of nature, in the same light, as that happier mind, which is more disposed to images of joy ; as for one, to whose eyes the sunshine has never carried light, to think of the surface of that earth on which he treads, with the same feeling of beauty and admiration, as the multitudes around him, whose eyes are awake to all the colours that adorn it. What is true, in these extreme cases, is not less true in cases that are less remarkable. How few are the opinions of any sort, in which the greater number of mankind concur ; and, even in the case of those opinions in which they are unanimous, how few, if they were to attempt to support them by argument, would support them by argument precisely similar. All might set out with the same conception, in their primary design ; and if the discovery of the strongest proofs depended on the mere will to discover the strongest, all would instantly, by the exercise of this simple will, be omnipotent logicians. But all are not omnipotent logicians,—for the intermediate conceptions which rise to one mind, do not rise to others ; and the relations, therefore, which those intermediate conceptions suggest, are felt, of course, and stated, only by those to whom the conceptions which suggest them have arisen.

The different order of propositions, in our trains of reasoning,—and consequently, in a great measure, the different results of reasoning,—may, then, it appears, depend on the mere differences of *simple suggestion*, in consequence of which different relations are felt, because the relative objects suggested to the mind are different. But, in like manner, as there are, in different minds, different tendencies of simple suggestion, there are also in different minds, peculiar tendencies to different relative suggestions, from the contemplation of the same objects. Any two objects may have various relations,—and may, therefore, suggest these variously. The same two columns, for example, when we look at the remains of ancient splendour, in some magnificent ruin, may, in the moment of the first suggestion, produce in our mind the feeling of their resemblance or difference,—of their relative position,—of their comparative degrees of beauty,—of their proper-

tion in dimensions,—or various other relations, that may be easily imagined, which connect them, as parts of one whole, with the melancholy traces of present decay, or the still more melancholy vestiges of the flourishing past. In different minds, there is a tendency to feel some of these relations, more than others,—a tendency which may be traced, in part, to original constitutional diversities; but which depends also, in part, on factitious habits, and on transient circumstances of the moment, intellectual or bodily. In short, there are secondary laws of relative suggestion, constitutional, habitual, and temporary, as there are secondary laws of simple suggestion, in like manner constitutional, habitual, and temporary; and these secondary laws, as well as those of simple suggestion, since they vary the relations which are felt by individuals, and therefore, the results of reflecting thought, which different individuals present to the world, are unquestionably to be taken into account, in our estimation of diversities of genius,—diversities, that consist both in the variety of the conceptions which arise, and the variety of the relations which those conceptions suggest,—and which, as one splendid compound, we are able to reduce to the simple elements that compose it.

From the influence, then, which education has on the tendencies both of simple and relative suggestion, we can, in this way, indirectly produce in part, that sagacity, or ready discovery of means of proof, which I have shown to be absolutely beyond our direct volition. We can continually render ourselves acquainted with more objects, and can thus increase the store of possible suggestions, which may on occasion present to us new means of proof; and we can even, by the influence of certain habits, so modify the general tendency of suggestion, that certain relations, rather than others, shall rise to the mind, or shall rise, at least, more rapidly and readily. How many arguments occur to a well cultivated understanding, in treating every subject which comes beneath its review, that never would have occurred to others!—and though not one of the separate suggestions, which either strengthen or adorn the reasoning, has been the object of a particular volition,—the general cultivation, from which they all flow, has been willed, and would not have taken place, but for that love of letters and science, which continued to animate the studies which it produced,—making it delightful to know, what it was happiness almost to wish to learn.

These remarks on the order of propositions, which constitute reasoning, have shown, I trust, that they depend on tendencies of the mind

more lasting than our momentary volitions,—that the relations which they involve, could not be felt by us, unless we had previously the conceptions, which are the subjects of the relations,—and that it is impossible for us to will any one of these conceptions; since, in that case, the conception must have existed, before it was willed into existence. The conceptions, then, and the feelings of relation, that is to say, the propositions, in the order in which they present themselves to our internal thought,—arise, by the simple laws of suggestion only,—conception suggesting conception, and that which is suggested, being felt to have a relation of some sort to the conception which suggested it.

The laws of simple suggestion,—according to which conceptions do not follow each other loosely, but those only which have a certain relation of some sort to each other,—furnish, as I have already said, the true explanation of the regularity of our reasonings. While there is a continued desire of discovering the relations of any particular object, it is not wonderful, that with this continued desire, the reasoning should itself be continuous; since the remaining conception of the object, the relations of which we wish to explore, and which must be as permanent, as the permanent desire that involves it, will, of course, suggest the conception of objects related to it; and, therefore, the relations themselves, as subsequent feelings of the mind. If we wish to discover the proportion of A to D, these conceptions, as long as the very wish which involves them remains, must, by the simple laws of suggestion, excite other conceptions related to them; and in the multitude of relative objects, thus capable of being suggested, it is not wonderful, that there should be some one, B or C, which has a common relation to both A and D; and which, therefore, becomes a measure for comparing them, or suggests this very relation without any such intentional comparison. Indeed, since A and D, both conceived together, form one complex feeling of the mind, it might be expected, that the relative objects, most likely to arise by suggestion, would be such as have a common relation to both parts—if I may so term them—of the complex feeling, by which they are suggested,—the very proofs, or intermediate conceptions, which form the links of our demonstration.

In these remarks, I speak of the series of propositions that arise in our mind when we meditate on any subject, not of the series which we submit, in discourse or in written works, to the consideration of others. Though it is impossible for us, even in these cases, to will a single conception or a single feeling of relation,—since this would be



to will into existence that which already exists,—it is, unquestionably, in our power not to clothe in words the conceptions or relations that have arisen in our thought ; and, by this mere omission of the parts of our internal series, which we regret as feeble or irrelative to our principal object, the whole series of propositions, as expressed, may seem very different, certainly far more forcible, than that which really passed through our mind, and produced in us that conviction or persuasion which we wish to diffuse. But still it must be remembered, that it is the omission only which makes the difference, and that in the whole series of propositions which we express in language, there is not a single conception or feeling of relation which we have directly willed.

Such is the process of ratiocination, considered as a natural process of the mind.

One conception follows another conception, according to certain laws of suggestion, to which our Divine Author has adapted our mental constitution ; and by another set of laws which the same Divine Author has established, certain feelings of relation arise from the consideration of the suggesting and suggested object. This is all in which reasoning, as felt by us, truly consists. We have the conception of A, it suggests B, and these two conceptions co-existing, we feel some relation which they bear to each other. B, thus suggested, suggests C ; and the relation of these is felt in like manner,—and thus, through the longest ratiocination, analytical or proportional, each subject of our thought suggests something which forms a part of it, and is involved in it, or something which has to it a certain relation of proportion ; and the relation of comprehension in the one case, or of proportion in the other case, is felt accordingly at every step. Nothing, surely, can be simpler than a process of this kind ; and it is not easy to conceive how the process could be made shorter than nature herself has rendered it, unless every truth were known to us by intuition.

## CHAPTER XI.

RELATIONS OF SUCCESSION. REDUCTION OF CERTAIN SUPPOSED FACULTIES TO RELATIVE SUCCESSION.—I. JUDGMENT.—II. REASONING.—III. ABSTRACTION.

THE relations suggested by objects, either perceived or conceived, were formerly arranged in two classes,—those of *Co-existence* and *Succession*. We have now sufficiently considered the former of these classes, both as the relations occur separately, and as they occur in those series which constitute *reasoning*, that at each step are only progressive feelings of relation, varying as the conceptions of the relative objects are different, and connected with each other, because the conceptions that arise in the course of the reasoning, are not loose, but regular.

The order of relations which we have next to consider, are those, which, as involving the notion of time, or priority and subsequence, I have denominated *Relations of Succession*. On these, however, it will not be necessary to dwell at any length. The only questions of difficulty which they involve, were fully discussed in an early part of this work, in which it was necessary, before proceeding to examine the changes or affections of the mind, in its varying phenomena, and the mental powers or susceptibilities which these changes or affections denote, that we should understand what is meant by the terms *change* and *power*, *cause* and *effect*.

The relations of succession, then, as the very name implies, are those, which the subjects of these relations bear to each other, as *prior* or *posterior* in time. What we term a *cause*, suggests its particular *effect*; what we term an *effect*, suggests its particular *cause*, when we have previously become acquainted with their order of succession. If the cause, however, suggested nothing more than the simple conception of the effect, and the effect nothing more than the simple conception of the object which was its cause, the suggestions would, of course, be referable to the power or susceptibility formerly considered by us,—that of *simple suggestion*, or *association*, as it is commonly termed. But the cause does not suggest the effect, merely as a separate object of our thought, nor the effect the cause, as a separate object. It suggests also the new feeling of their mutual relation. When I look at a picture of Titian, for example, and the conception

of the painter instantly arises, I do not think of Titian merely as an individual, unconnected with the object which I perceive, I do not think of him in the same manner as I may have thought of him repeatedly, at other times, when the reading of his name, or the mention of him in conversation on works of art, or any other accidental circumstance may have recalled him to my mind. If I had only the conception of Titian, as I may have conceived him in those other cases, the suggestion would be truly a simple suggestion; but this simple conception of the artist is instantly followed by another feeling of his connection with that particular work of his art, which is before my eyes,—a relation, which it requires no great analytic discrimination to separate from the simple conception itself, and which arises precisely in the same way as the other relations, which have been considered by us,—the relation of resemblance, for example, when, in music, one air suggests to us a similar melody,—or the relation of proportion, when we think of the squares of the sides of a right-angled triangle, in Pythagoras's celebrated theorem.

The relations of succession, then, are as distinct from the simple perceptions or conceptions, which suggest them, and as truly indicative therefore, of a peculiar power or susceptibility of the mind, as the relations of co-existence are distinct from the perceptions or conceptions which suggest them. They are relations either of casual or of invariable antecedence or consequence; and we distinguish these as clearly in our thought, as we distinguish any other two relations. We speak of events which happened after other events, as mere dates in chronology. We speak of other events, as the effects of events or circumstances that preceded them. The relations of *invariable* antecedence and consequence, in distinction from merely *casual* antecedence and consequence, is, as I have already frequently stated, this relation of *causes and effects*. When I regard any object, and feel this relation of uniform proximity of succession, which it bears to some prior object, I term it an effect of that prior object. When I look forward, instead of backward, and regard the present object in relation to some other object, which is not yet existing, I feel a relation, which, in reference to the object that is to be produced, may be termed *fitness* or *aptitude*, and it is on our knowledge of these fitnesses or aptitudes, that all practical science is founded. By our acquaintance with this relation, we acquire a command, not merely of existing things, but almost of things, that, as yet, have scarcely any more real existence, than the creations of poetic fancy. We lead the future, almost at our

will, as if it were present. While mechanic hands are chipping the rough block, or adding slowly stone to stone, with little more foresight than of the place where the next stone is to be added, there is an eye which has already seen that imperfect edifice in all its finished splendour, which other eyes are incapable of seeing, till year after year shall have unfolded, through a series of progressive changes, that finished form, which is their ultimate result. What is true, in architectural design, is not less true in all the other arts, which science has evolved. There are hands continually toiling to produce what exists already to the mind of that philosopher, whom they almost blindly obey,—who, by his knowledge of the various aptitudes of things, knows, not merely what is, but what must be,—beholding, through a long series of effects, that ultimate effect of convenience or beauty, which is at once to add some new enjoyments to life, and to confer additional glory on the intellectual empire of that being, whom God has formed to image, however faintly, the power by which he raised him into existence. We cannot look around us, without discovering, in every work of human art, which meets our eye, the benefits, which we have received from our knowledge of this one relation. Whatever industry has conferred upon us,—the security, the happiness, the splendour, and, in a great measure, the very virtues of social life,—are referable to it ; since industry is nothing more than the practical application of those productive fitnesses, which must have been felt and known, before industry could begin.

Such is the value of that susceptibility of our mind, by which we feel the relations of objects to each other as successive,—when considered in reference to what is commonly termed science. It has made us what we are,—and when we think of what we now are, and of what the race of mankind once was,—to speculate on the future condition of man, in those distant ages, which still await him on this scene of earth,—when new relations shall have been evolved in objects the most familiar to us, and new arts consequently developed, which, with our present knowledge, no genius can anticipate, is almost as if we were speculating on the possible functions and enjoyments of some higher being.

Objects, or events, or feelings, when we consider them in the relation which they bear to each other as successive, may be regarded as casually *prior* or *posterior*, when they occur as parts of different trains, or as invariably *antecedent* and *consequent*, when they occur as parts of a single train in the order of causes and effects.

The relation of objects, as casually successive, has already been sufficiently discussed. As there is nothing permanent in the relation, it scarcely can be counted an object of science. Its only advantage,—but this is a very great advantage,—is that which it affords as an assistance to our memory, which is thus enabled to preserve much knowledge that might otherwise be lost; since we are able, by the accidental bearings of other events in time, to form a sort of chronology of many of those little events of life, that are great in relation to our wishes and affections, and that probably would have been forgotten, but for those fixed points, in the track of our life, which recall to us what lay between. By the aid of these, we are able to journey again over hours, and days, and months of happiness, in years the most remote, connecting together, in one delightful series, events, which would have been of little moment if remembered singly, but which, when combined, are almost representative of the group of pleasures and friendships that existed once, but may perhaps exist to us no more; as in the similar order of contiguity in place, it would be productive but of slight gratification, if we were to think only of some separate tree, or rock, or stream, or meadow of the landscape of our infancy. It is when the whole scene rises before us in combination,—when the tree, under which we hollowed out our seat, waves over the rock, from which we have leaped with a sort of fearful delight to the opposite overhanging cliff, and the rivulet foams in the narrow channel between, spreading out, afterwards, its waters in the sunny expanse in which we bathed, and separating the field of our sports from the churchyard, at which we have cast, in the twilight, many a trembling glance; when all which nature blended before us, in the perceptions of our earliest years, thus co-exists in our conception, it is then that we truly recognise the scene, not as object of memory only, but as if present to our very eyes and heart. Such is the effect of the representation of objects in the order in which they co-existed in place; and it is not wonderful, that the feeling of the relation of their order in time, should have a similar influence on our emotions, by giving unity of connexion; and thus, as it were, additional and more interesting reality to all which we remember.

The relation even of casual succession, then, by the connexion and grouping of events to which it gives rise, and the consequent aid and interest which it yields to our remembrance, affords no slight accession of enjoyment and permanent utility. The relations of invariable antecedents and consequents, however, which are felt by us to be essen-

tially different from mere casual proximity, and to be all that is truly involved in our notion of power or causation, are of much greater importance to that intellectual, and moral, and physical life, which may almost be said to depend on them. Even if they gave us nothing more than our knowledge of the uniform connexions of past events, as objects of mere speculative science, at once constituting and explaining the phenomena that excited our astonishment, and awoke that early curiosity which they have continued to busy ever since, they would furnish, by the view which they open of the powers of nature, and of all the gracious purposes to which those powers have been subservient, one of the sublimest delights of which our spiritual being is capable.

This gratification they would yield to us, even if we were to regard them only in the past, as objects of a science purely speculative. But when we consider the relations of events, in their aptitudes to precede and follow, as equally diffused over the time that is to come, as presenting to us everywhere, in the past or present sequences observed by us, the source of some future good or future evil,—of good which we can obtain, and of evil which we can avoid, merely by knowing the order in which these past sequences have occurred,—the knowledge of these invariable relations of succession becomes to us inestimable,—not as a medium only of intellectual luxury, but as the medium of all the arts of life, and even of the continuance of our very physical existence, which is preserved only by an unceasing adaptation of our actions to the fitnesses or tendencies of external things.

All practical science is the knowledge of these aptitudes of things in their various circumstances of combination, as every art is the employment of them, in conformity with this knowledge, with a view to those future changes which they tend to produce in all the different circumstances in which objects can be placed. To know how to add any enjoyment to life, or how to lessen any of its evils, is nothing more, in any case, than to know the relation which objects bear to each other, as antecedent and consequent.

Of the importance of the feeling of this relation to the physical sciences, which is abundantly evident of itself, it would be vain to attempt to give any fuller illustration. But it must be remembered, that the mind is a subject of this relation, as much as the body,—that there are aptitudes of producing certain *feelings*, as much as of producing certain *material changes*,—and that the power which discerns or feels the mere aptitude, in the one case, is not essentially distinct from the power which discerns or feels the mere aptitude, in the other case.

The particular relations that are felt, are indeed different, as the relative objects are different, but not that general susceptibility of the mind, by which it is capable of feeling the relation of fitness or unfitness. To foreknow, in mechanics, what combination of wheels and pulleys will be able to elevate a certain weight, is to feel one sort of fitness or relation of antecedence. To foreknow, in chemistry, what more powerful attraction will overcome an affinity that is weaker, and precipitate a substance, which we wish to obtain, from the liquid that holds it in solution, is to feel another sort of fitness. The particular feelings of relation, in these cases, imply acquirements that are very different; but no one, on account of this mere difference of the objects of which the relation of antecedence and consequence is felt, thinks of classing the chemical foresight as indicative of an intellectual power essentially different from that, which, in the applications of mechanic foresight, feels the relation of the weights and pulleys in a machine, and foresees, by a knowledge of this relation, the equilibrium or preponderance which is to result. The experience which gives the foresight, is, indeed, different, but the power which reasons from that different experience is the same. The susceptibility of the same feeling of the relation of productive aptitude, however, has, in certain *mental* cases, been supposed to be different, merely because its objects are different; and discriminations of mere fitness or unfitness, which are truly referable to the same simple capacity of relative suggestion, that foresees the future by knowing the present, have been formed into a class apart, as if not the discriminations only were different, but the power itself which has formed them.

When we feel any of the mechanical or chemical relations of succession, and predict, accordingly, events which are to take place, we are commonly said to do this by the power of reasoning. Even in many of the mental phenomena, when we venture, in like manner, to predict the future, from our knowledge of the relation of feelings to each other, as uniformly successive, we are said to make the prediction by the power of reasoning. When a statesman, for example, meditates on the probable effects of a particular law which is about to be enacted, and from his knowledge of the interests, and passions, and prejudices,—the wisdom and the very ignorance of man,—calculates the relative amount of good and evil, which it may possibly produce to those frail, half-stubborn, half-yielding multitudes, whom he must often benefit against their will, and save from the long evil, of which they see only the momentary good, there is no one who hesitates in ascribing

this political foresight to the sagacity of his power of reasoning, or of drawing accurate conclusions, as to future sequences of events, from his observations of the past. In the calculation of the motives which may operate in the general mind, however, nothing more is implied than a knowledge of the relation of certain feelings to other feelings, reciprocally antecedent and consequent. But if the states of mind, the relation of which, as successive to other states of mind, is felt by us, be of a different order,—if, instead of a *legislator*, feeling accurately the relation of certain feelings to certain attendant emotions in the mind of the people, we imagine a *critic*, feeling, with equal precision, the relation of certain perceptions of form, or colour, or sound, to certain emotions of admiration or disgust that are to arise in the mind of him who has those perceptions, though all which is felt, in both cases, is a certain relation of customary antecedence, we are instantly said to speak of a different power of the mind. The power which we consider, is said to be the power of *Taste*.

This distinction of the power of taste,—in appreciating the excellence of the fine arts, and the beauties of nature, from that general capacity of feeling the aptitudes of certain *feelings*, to be followed by certain *other feelings*, of which it is only a modification, has arisen, there can be very little doubt, from the complexity of the term *taste*, in our common phraseology,—as involving two classes of feelings, that admit of being separated in our thought by a very easy analysis,—*emotions*, and *judgments* of the objects that are fit or unfit to excite those emotions. Certain objects are not merely perceived by us, as forms, or colours, or sounds; the perception of these forms, and colours, and sounds, is followed by an *emotion* which is of various nature according to the nature of the object. What we call *beauty*, is, in our mind, an emotion,—as, in external things, it is the aptitude to produce this emotion. To feel this emotion is one state of mind;—to know the relation which other previous feelings bear to it—what forms, or sounds, or colours, separately or together, have a fitness of producing the emotion, is another state of mind, as distinct from it, as the political sagacity of the statesman, in anticipating the violence of popular feeling, on any particular occasion, is distinct from those passions and prejudices of the vulgar, which he foresees, as the certain effects of certain necessary measures, and which he strives accordingly, by some of the expedients of his mighty art, to disarm or to dissipate. If the judgments of taste had been as clearly distinguished from the emotions which it measures in their relation to the objects that are likely or unlikely to produce them, as the



wisdom of the politician, from the passions which that wisdom contemplates, in their relation to the circumstances which may tend to inflame them, we should as little have thought of ranking it as a peculiar power, as we think, at present, of inventing new names of faculties corresponding with all the variety of events corporeal or mental, in which we are capable of inferring the future from the past, by our knowledge of the reciprocal tendencies of objects,—of ranking, for example, as a peculiar intellectual power, distinct from the general power of reason. the *skill* with which the legislator adapts his regulations to the varying circumstances of society,—or, as in the physics of matter, we think of ascribing to different intellectual powers, the reasonings of the chemist and of the mechanician. Chemistry, mechanics, politics, taste,—that is to say, the critical part of taste,—of course imply previous observation of the successions of those different phenomena, material and mental, which are the subject of these respective sciences,—an experience of the past that is different in each particular case; but when the successions of the different phenomena have been observed, it is the same faculty, which, in all these sciences alike, predicting the future from the past, feels the relation of antecedence of each phenomenon to its successive phenomena, distinguishing the particular antecedents that are more or less likely to be followed by particular consequents. To call taste a *science*, like chemistry, or mechanics, or even politics, may seem at first a bold, and perhaps even an unwarrantable use of the term; but I have no hesitation in calling it a *science*, because it is truly a science, as much as any other knowledge of the successions of phenomena to which we give that name,—the science of certain effects which may be anticipated as the consequents of certain antecedents. It is a science, indeed, which is not capable of the universality of some other sciences, because it is a science of *emotions*, that must, in some measure, at least, have been *felt* by him who judges of the fitness of certain objects to produce these emotions; and all have not this sensibility. But the sensibility relates to the existence of the emotions only, which, as I have already stated, are mental phenomena of a different class, from the subsequent judgments, which estimate the fitness of objects to excite the emotions. The feeling of these emotions is unquestionably not a science, more than the feelings of security and patriotism, or discontent and selfish ambition, which the statesman must have in view, are sciences. But the knowledge of those objects which will excite the most general emotions of beauty and admiration, is a science, as the political knowledge of the means

that will have most general influence in producing the emotions of civil happiness and contentment, or the fury of popular indignation, is a science. Both are nothing more than the experience of the feelings which follow certain other feelings, and the consequent feeling of the relation of their future aptitudes. We may deny the name of a science to both, but if we allow it to the one, I cannot see any reason which should lead us to deny it to the other.

I am aware that many authors have concurred, in not regarding *taste* as a simple faculty of the mind; but the taste, of which they speak, is chiefly the very emotion of pleasure, to the production of which they conceive various circumstances to be essential. The two great elements, as it appears to me, which it is of most importance to distinguish, are the emotion itself, in whatever way it may arise, and however complex it may be, and the feeling of the relation of certain forms, sounds, colours, conceptions, or various combinations of these, to this emotion as their effect,—the feeling of the relation of the one, as successive in time to the other, and of the corresponding aptitude of that other for producing it. Whatever additional analyses may be formed by philosophers of the emotion itself, this analysis, at least, seems to me obvious and indisputable. I proceed upon it, therefore, with confidence, referring the one element to our susceptibility of the relative suggestions of fitness, that are necessarily as various, as the phenomena which precede and follow them,—the other primary element to our susceptibility of emotion.

In concluding my view of the phenomena of Simple Suggestion, or, as it is more commonly termed, *Association*, I considered those various modifications of it, which philosophers, from a defective analysis of the phenomena, had converted into separate intellectual powers. In concluding my view of the phenomena of *Relative Suggestion*, it may be necessary, in like manner, to take such a view, though the field over which we have to move, is, in this case, a more narrow one.

The tendency of the mind, which I have distinguished by the name of *relative suggestion*, is that by which, on perceiving or conceiving objects together, we are instantly impressed with certain feelings of their mutual relation. These suggested feelings are feelings of a particular kind, and require, therefore, to be classed separately from the perceptions or conceptions, which suggest them, but do not involve them.

Our relative suggestions, then, are those feelings of relation, which arise from the perception or conception of two or more objects, or

two or more affections of our mind,—feelings which are of considerable variety, and which I classed under two heads, as the relations of *co-existence*, and the relations of *succession*. It is easy for us in every case, to separate this feeling of relation from the perceptions or conceptions themselves. We perceive or conceive objects ;—we feel them to be variously related ; and the feeling of the relation itself is not more mysterious, than the perception or simple suggestion, which may have given rise to it. The law of mind, by which, on considering four and eight, I feel a certain relation of proportion,—the same precise relation which I feel, on considering together five and ten, fifty and a hundred,—is as clear and intelligible a law of our mental constitution, as that by which I am able to form the separate notion, either of four or eight, five or ten, fifty or a hundred.

With this susceptibility of relative suggestion, the faculty of judgment, as that term is commonly employed, may be considered as nearly synonymous ; and I have accordingly often used it as synonymous, in treating of the different relations that have come under our review.

But those who ascribe judgment to man, ascribe to him also another faculty, which they distinguish by the name of *reason*,—though reasoning itself is found, when analyzed, to be nothing more than a series of judgments. The whole is thus represented as something different from all the parts which compose it. Whether we reason syllogistically, with the schoolmen, or according to those simpler processes of thought, which nature teaches, our reasoning is divisible into a number of consecutive judgments, or feelings of relation ; and if we take away these consecutive judgments, we have nothing behind, which can be called a ratiocination. In a simple proposition, we take one step, or feel one relation,—in an enthymeme, we take two steps, or feel two relations,—in a syllogism, we take three steps, or feel three relations ; but we never think, when we speak of the motion of our limbs, that the power of taking three steps differs essentially from the power of taking one ; and that we must, therefore, invent new names of bodily faculties for every slight variety, or even every simple repetition of movement. If this amplification of faculties would be absurd in treating of the mere motion of our limbs, it is surely not more philosophic, in the case of the intellectual exercise.

The circumstance, which led to the distinction of *reason* from judgment, was perhaps, however, not the mere length and mutual connexion of the series, so much as that mistake with respect to the power falsely ascribed to the mind, of finding out, by some voluntary process, those intervening propositions, which serve as the medium of proof.

We cannot *invent* a single medium of proof; but the proofs arise to us independently of our will, in the same manner, as the primary subject of the proposition, which we analyze in our reasoning, itself arose. The *desire* of tracing all the relations of an object, when we meditate, may co-exist with the successive feelings of relations as they arise,—and it is this complex state of mind, in which intention or desire continues to co-exist with these successive feelings, to which we commonly give the name of reasoning. But it surely is not difficult to analyze this complex state, and to discover in it, as its only elements, the desire itself, with the conceptions which it involves, or which it suggests, and the separate relations of these conceptions, which rise precisely as they arose, and are felt precisely as they were felt before, on other occasions, when no such desire existed, and when the relative objects chanced to present themselves together to our perceptions, or in our loosest and most irregular trains of thought. The *permanence* of the desire, indeed, keeps the object to which it relates more permanently before us, and allows therefore, a greater variety of relative suggestions belonging to it to arise; but it does not affect the principle itself, which develops these relations. Each arises, as before, unwilling. Yet, while this power of willing conceptions and relations was falsely ascribed to the mind, it was a very natural consequence of this mistake, that the reasoning, which involved the supposed invention, should be regarded as essentially different from the judgments, or simple feelings of relation, that involved no such exercise of voluntary power.

Reasoning then, in its juster sense, as felt by us internally, is nothing more than a series of relative suggestions, of which the separate subjects are felt by us to be mutually related—as expressed in language, it is merely a series of propositions, each of which is only a verbal statement of some relation internally felt by us. There is nothing, therefore, involved in the ratiocination independently of the accompanying desire, but a series of feelings of relation, to the susceptibility of which feelings, accordingly, the faculty called *reason*, and the faculty called *judgment*, may equally be reduced. If we take away at each step the mere feeling of relation, the judgment is nothing, and if we take away the separate feelings termed judgments, nothing remains to be denominated reasoning.

Another faculty, with which the mind has been enriched, by those systematic writers, who have examined its phenomena, and ranked them under different powers, is the faculty of *abstraction*, a faculty by

which we are supposed to be capable of separating in our thought certain parts of our complex notions, and of considering them thus abstracted from the rest.

This supposed faculty, however, is not merely unreal, as ascribed to the mind, but, I may add, even that such a faculty is impossible, since every exertion of it would imply a contradiction.

In abstraction, the mind is supposed to single out a particular part of some one of its complex notions, for particular consideration. But what is the state of the mind immediately preceding this intentional separation—its state at the moment in which the supposed faculty is conceived to be called into exercise? Does it not involve necessarily the very abstraction which it is supposed to produce? and must we not, therefore, in admitting such a power of voluntary separation, admit an infinite series of preceding abstractions, to account for a single act of abstraction? If we know what we single out, we have already performed all the separation which is necessary; if we do not know what we are singling out, and do not even know that we are singling out any thing, the separate part of the complex whole, may, indeed, rise to our conception; but it cannot rise by the operation of any voluntary faculty. That such conceptions do indeed arise, as states of the mind, there can be no question. In every sentence which we read—in every affirmation which we make—in almost every portion of our silent train of thoughts, some decomposition of more complex perceptions or notions has taken place. The exact recurrence of any complex whole, at any two moments, is perhaps what never takes place. After we look at a scene before us, so long as to have made every part of it familiar, if we close our eyes to think of it, in the very moment of bringing our eyelids together, some change of this kind has taken place. The complex whole, which we saw the very instant before, when conceived by us in this instant succession, is no longer, in every circumstance, the same complex whole. Some part, or rather many parts, are lost altogether. A still greater number of parts are variously diversified,—and though we should still call the scene the same, it would appear to us a very different scene, if our conception could be embodied and presented to our eye, together with the real landscape of which it seems to us the copy. If this change takes place in a single instant, at longer intervals, it cannot fail to be much more considerable, though the very interval which gives occasion to the greater diversity, prevents the diversity itself from being equally felt by us.

Abstraction, then,—as far as abstraction consists in the rise of conceptions in the mind, which are parts of former mental affections, more complex than these, does unquestionably occur; and, since it occurs, it must occur according to laws which are truly laws of the mind, and must indicate some mental power, or powers, in consequence of which the conceptions termed abstractions arise. Is it necessary, however, to have recourse to any peculiar faculty, or are they not rather modifications of those susceptibilities of the mind, which have been already considered by us?

In treating of those states of the mind, which constitute our general notions, I have already, in a great measure, anticipated the remarks, which it might otherwise be necessary to offer, in explanation of abstraction. The relative suggestions of resemblance, are, in truth, or at least involve as parts of the suggestion,—those very feelings, for the production of which this peculiar faculty is assigned. We perceive two objects,—a rock, for example, and a tree. We press against them—they both produce in us that sensation, which constitutes our feeling of resistance. We give the name of *hardness* to this common property of the external objects; and our mere feeling of resemblance, when referred to the resembling objects, is thus converted into an abstraction. If we are capable of feeling the resemblance, the abstraction is surely already formed, and needs, therefore, no other power to produce it.

To that principle of *relative suggestion*, by which we feel the resemblance of objects in certain respects, to the exclusion, consequently, of all the other circumstances, in which they have no resemblance, by far the greater number of our abstractions, and those which most commonly go under that name, may, in this manner, be traced; since, in consequence of this principle of our mind, we are almost incessantly feeling some relation of similarity in objects, and omitting, in consequence, in this feeling of resemblance, the parts or circumstances of the complex whole, in which no similarity is felt. What is thus termed abstraction, is the very notion of partial similarity. It would be as impossible to regard objects as similar in certain respects, without having the conceptions termed abstract, as to see, without vision, or to hope, without desire. The capacity of the feeling of resemblance, then, is the great source of the conceptions termed abstract. Many of them, however, may be referred, not to that susceptibility of the mind, by which our relative suggestions arise, but to that other susceptibility of suggestions of another kind, which we previously considered. In those common instances of simple suggestion, which philosophers have ascribed to a principle of association, they never have thought

it necessary to prove, nor have they even contended, that the feelings which arise in consequence of this mere association, must be exact transcripts of the former feelings in every respect, however complex these former feelings may have been; that, when we have seen a group of objects together, no part of this group can be recalled, without the rest—no rock, or streamlet, of a particular valley, for example, without every tree, and every branch of every tree, that were seen by us, waving over the little current, and every minute angle of the rock, as if measured with geometrical precision. Suggestions of images, so exact as this, perhaps never occur; and if every conception, therefore, which meets some circumstance of the complex perception, which has given rise to it, be the result of a faculty, which is to be termed the faculty of abstraction, the whole imagery of our thought, which has been ascribed to an associating or suggesting principle, should have been considered rather as the result of this power, in its never-ceasing operation. But if we allow, that in ordinary association, the principle of simple suggestion can account for the rise of conceptions, that omit some circumstances of the past, it would surely be absurd to attempt any limitation of the number of circumstances which may be omitted, by the operation of this principle alone, and to refer every circumstance that is omitted beyond this definite number, to another faculty, absolutely distinct. The truth is, that it is only of certain parts of any complex perception, that our simple suggestions, in any case, are transcripts,—that the same power, which thus, without any effort of our volition, and even without our consciousness, that such a suggestion is on the point of taking place, brings before us, only three out of four circumstances, that co-existed in some former perception, might as readily be supposed to bring before us two of the four, or only one,—and that the abstraction, in such a case, would be thus as independent of our will, as the simple suggestion; since it would be, in truth, only the simple suggestion, under another name, being termed an *abstraction*, merely because, in certain cases, we might be able to remember the complex whole, with the circumstances omitted in the former partial suggestion, and thus to discover, by comparison of the two co-existing conceptions, that the one is to the other, as a whole to some part of the whole. If this comparison could be made by us in every case, there is not a single conception, in our whole train of memory or fancy, which would not equally deserve to be denominated an abstraction.

Many of the states of mind, which we term abstractions, might thus arise by mere simple suggestion, though we had not, in addition to this

capacity, that susceptibility of relative suggestion, by which we discover resemblance, and to which, certainly, we are indebted for the far greater number of feelings, which are termed abstract ideas. The partial simple suggestion of the qualities of objects, in our trains of thought, is less wonderful, when we consider how our complex notions of objects are formed. In conceiving the hardness separately from the whiteness of an object, we have no feeling that is absolutely new; we only repeat the process by which our conceptions of these qualities were originally formed. We received them separately, through the medium of different senses; and each, when it recurs separately, is but the transcript of the primary separate sensation.

But even though objects, as originally perceived, had been precisely, in every respect, what they now appear to us,—concretes of many qualities,—the capacity of relative suggestion, by which we feel the resemblances of objects, would be of itself, as I have said, sufficient to account for the abstractions, of which philosophers have written so much. It is superfluous, therefore, to ascribe to another peculiar faculty, what must take place, if we admit only the common mental susceptibilities, which all admit. If we are capable of perceiving a resemblance of some sort, when we look at a swan and on snow, why should we be astonished that we have invented the word *whiteness*, to signify the common circumstance of resemblance? Or why should we have recourse for this feeling of whiteness itself to any capacity of the mind, but that which evolves to us the similarity which we are acknowledged to be capable of feeling?

We do not need any new operation, to conceive what we must have conceived before the supposed operation itself could take place.

I have now, then, brought to a conclusion my analysis of the intellectual phenomena; and have shown, or, at least, have endeavoured to show, that all these phenomena, which are commonly ascribed to many distinct faculties, are truly referable only to two,—the capacity of *simple suggestion*, which gives to us conceptions of external objects formerly perceived, and of all the variety of our past internal feelings, as mere conceptions, or fainter images of the past; and the capacity of *relative suggestion*, by which the objects of our perception or conception, that are themselves separate, no longer appear to us separate, but are instantly invested by us with various relations that seem to bind them to each other, as if our mind could give its own unity to the innumerable objects which it comprehends, and, like that mighty Spirit which once hovered over the confusion of unformed nature, convert into a universe, what was only chaos before.



## PART IV.

### OF EMOTIONS.

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#### CHAPTER I.

##### OF IMMEDIATE EMOTIONS, INVOLVING NO MORAL FEELING.

##### SECTION I.—*General Remarks, and Classification of Emotions.*

THE only remaining phenomena, which, according to our original division, remain to be considered, are our *emotions*.

These are distinguished from the external affections of the mind, by the circumstance, that they are not the immediate consequences of the presence of external objects; but, when excited by objects without, are excited only indirectly, through the medium of those direct feelings, which are commonly termed sensations or perceptions. They differ from the other order of the same internal class,—the intellectual states of mind,—by that peculiar vividness of feeling, which every one understands, but which it is impossible to express, by any verbal definition; as truly impossible, as to define sweetness or bitterness, a sound or a smell, in any other way, than by a statement of the circumstances in which they arise. There is no reason to fear, however, from this impossibility of verbal definition, that any one, who has tasted what is sweet or bitter, or enjoyed the pleasures of melody and fragrance, will be at all in danger of confounding these terms; and as little reason is there to fear, that our emotions will be confounded with our intellectual states of mind, by those who have simply remembered and compared, and have also loved or hated, desired or feared.

The feelings of this order, are important in their relation to those other phenomena, which have been the subjects of our inquiry; since they comprehend all the higher delights which attend the exercise of our sensitive and intellectual functions. The mere pleasures of *sense*,

indeed, as direct and simple pleasures, we do not owe to them ; but we owe to them every thing which confers on those pleasures a more ennobling value, by the enjoyments of social affection which are mingled with them, or the gratitude which, in the enjoyment of them, looks to their Divine Author. We might, perhaps, in like manner, have been so constituted, with respect to our *intellectual* states of mind, as to have had all the varieties of these, our remembrances, judgments, and creations of fancy, without our *emotions*. But without the emotions which accompany them, of how little value would the mere intellectual functions have been ! It is to our vivid feelings of this class, we must look for those tender regards, which make our remembrances sacred—for that love of truth, and glory, and mankind, without which, to animate and reward us, in our discovery and diffusion of knowledge, the continued exercise of judgment would be a fatigue rather than a satisfaction—and for all that delightful wonder which we feel, when we contemplate the admirable creations of fancy, or the still more admirable beauties of the unfading model—that model which is ever before us, and the imitation of which, as has been truly said, is the only *imitation* that is itself *originality*. By our other mental functions, we are mere spectators of the machinery of the universe, living and inanimate ; by our *emotions*, we are admirers of nature, lovers of man, adorers of God. The earth, without them, would be only a field of colour, inhabited by beings who may contribute, indeed, more permanently, to our means of physical comfort, than any one of the inanimate forms which we behold, but who, beyond the moment in which they are capable of affecting us with pain or pleasure, would be only like the other forms and colours, which would meet us wherever we turned our weary and listless eyes ; and God himself, the source of all good, and the object of all worship, would be only the Being by whom the world was made.

In this picture of our emotions, however, I have presented them in their fairest aspects ; there are aspects, which they assume, as terrible as these are attractive ; but even, terrible as they are, they are not the less interesting objects of our contemplation. They are the enemies with which our moral combat, in the warfare of life, is to be carried on ; and, if there be enemies that are to assail us, it is good for us to know all the arms and all the arts with which we are to be assailed ; as it is good for us to know all the misery which would await our defeat, as much as all the happiness which would crown our success, that our conflict may be the stronger, and our victory, therefore, the more sure.

In the list of our emotions of this formidable class, is to be found every passion which can render life guilty and miserable,—a single hour of which, if that hour be an hour of uncontrolled dominion, may destroy happiness forever, and leave little more of virtue than is necessary for giving all its horror to remorse. There are feelings, as blasting to every desire of good that may still linger in the heart of the frail victim, who is not yet wholly corrupted, as those poisonous gales of the desert, which not merely lift in whirlwinds the sands that have often been tossed before, but wither even the few fresh leaves, which, on some spot of scanty verdure, have still been flourishing amid the general sterility.

In entering on the consideration of Emotions, it may seem doubtful whether it would be more expedient to treat of them simply as elementary feelings, or in those complex forms in which they usually exist, and have received certain definite characteristic names that are familiar to us. This latter mode appears, on the whole, more advisable, as affording many advantages, direct and indirect, and allowing equally the necessary analysis in each particular case.

In treating of them in this view, the most obvious principle of general arrangement seems to be their relation to *time*,—as *immediate*, or involving no notion of time whatever,—as *retrospective*, in relation to the past,—or as *prospective*, in relation to the future. *Admiration*, *remorse*, *hope*, may serve as particular instances, to illustrate my meaning in this distinction. We *admire* what is before us,—we feel *remorse* for some past crime,—we *hope* some future good.

In conformity with this arrangement of our emotions, as *immediate*, *retrospective*, *prospective*, the first set which we have to consider, are those which arise without involving necessarily any notion of time.

These *immediate emotions*, as I have termed them, may be subdivided, according to the most interesting of their relations,—as they do not involve any feeling that can be termed *moral*, or as they do involve some moral affection.

Of the former kind, which do not involve necessarily any moral affection, are *cheerfulness*, *melancholy*,—our *wonder* at what is new and unexpected,—our *mental* weariness of what is long continued without interest,—our feelings of *beauty*, and that opposite emotion, which has no corresponding and equal name, since *ugliness* can scarcely be regarded as co-extensive with it,—our feelings of *sublimity* and *ludicrousness*.

To the latter subdivision may be referred the vivid feelings, that constitute to our heart what we distinguish by the names of *vice* and

*virtue*,—if these vivid feelings be considered simply as *emotions*, distinct from the judgments, which may at the same time measure actions, in reference to some particular standard of morality, or to the amount of particular or general good, which they may have tended to produce, and which might so measure them, without any moral emotion, as a mathematician measures the proportion of one figure to another,—our emotions of love and hate,—of sympathy with the happy and with the miserable,—of pride and humility, in the various forms which these assume.

These, if not all, are at least the most important of our *immediate emotions*.

## SECTION II.—Of Cheerfulness and Melancholy.

**CHEERFULNESS**, which, at every moment, may be considered only as a modification of joy, is a sort of perpetual gladness. It is that state, which, in every one,—even in those of the most gloomy disposition,—remains for some time after any event of unexpected happiness,—though the event itself may not be present to their conception at the time ;—and which, in many of gayer temperament, seems to be almost a constant frame of the mind. In the early period of life, this alacrity of spirit is like that bodily alacrity, with which every limb, as it bounds along, seems to have a delightful consciousness of its vigour. To suspend the mental cheerfulness, for any length of time, is, then, as difficult, as to keep fixed, for any length of time, those muscles, to which exercise is almost a species of repose, and repose itself, fatigue. In more advanced life, this sort of animal gladness is rarer. We are not happy, without knowing why we are happy ; and though we may still be susceptible of joy, perhaps as intense, or even more intense, than in our years of unreflecting merriment, our joy must arise from a cause of corresponding importance. Yet, even down to the close of extreme old age, there still recur occasionally some gleams of this almost instinctive happiness, like a vision of other years, or, like those brilliant and unexpected coruscations, which sometimes flash along the midnight of a wintry sky, and of which we are too ignorant of the circumstances that produce them, to know when to predict their return.

Of *Melancholy*, I may remark, in like manner, that it is a state of mind, which even the gayest must feel, for some time, after any calamity, and which many feel for the greater part of life, without any particular calamity, to which they can ascribe it. Without knowing why they should be sorrowful, they still are sorrowful,—even though the weathercock should not have moved a single point nearer to the east, nor a single additional cloud given a little more shade to the vivid brightness to the sun.

I need not speak of that *extreme depression*, which constitutes the most miserable form of insanity, the most miserable disease,—that fixed and deadly gloom of soul, to which there is no sunshine in the summer sky,—no verdure or blossom in the summer field,—no kindness in affection,—no purity in the very remembrance of innocence itself—no Heaven, but hell,—no God, but a demon of wrath.

Cases of this dreadful kind, however, are fortunately rare ;—but some degree of melancholy all must have experienced—that *internal sadness*, which we diffuse unconsciously from our own mind *over the* brightest and gayest objects without, almost in the same manner and with the same unflinching certainty, as we invest them with the colours, which are only in our mental vision.

Of the melancholy of common life, there are two species that have little resemblance. There is a *sullen gloom*, which disposes to unkindness, and every bad passion ; a fretfulness, in all the daily and hourly intercourse of familiar life, which, if it weary at last the assiduities of friendship, sees only the neglect which it has forced, and not the perversity of humour which gave occasion to it, and soon learns to hate, therefore, what it considers as ingratitude and injustice,—or, which, if friendship be still assiduous as before, sees, in these very assiduities, a proof, not of the strength of that affection, which has forgotten the acrimony to sooth the supposed uneasiness which gave it rise, but a proof that there has been no offensive acrimony to be forgotten, and persists, therefore, in every peevish caprice, till the domestic tyranny become habitual. This melancholy temper, so poisonous to the happiness, not of the individual only, but of all those who are within the circle of its influence, and who feel their misery the more, because it may, perhaps, arise from one whom they strive, and vainly strive, to love, is the temper of a vulgar mind. But there is a melancholy of a gentler species, a melancholy which, as it arises, in a great measure, from a view of the sufferings of man, disposes to a warmer love of man the *sufferer*, and which is almost as essential to

the finer emotions of virtue, as it is to the nicer sensibilities of poetic genius.

How universally a certain degree of disposition to melancholy, is supposed to be connected with *genius*, at least with poetic genius, is manifest from every description which has been given by those who have formed imaginary pictures of the rise and progress of this high character of thought. The descriptions, I have said, are imaginary, but they still show sufficiently the extent of that observation, on which so general an agreement must have been founded. The melancholy, indeed, is not inconsistent with occasional emotions of an opposite kind; on the contrary, it is always supposed to be coupled with a disposition to mirth, on occasions in which others see perhaps as little cause of merriment, as they before saw of melancholy,—but the general character to which the mind most readily returns, is that of sadness,—a sadness, however of the gentle and benevolent kind.

The state of melancholy, when it is not constitutional and permanent, but temporary, is a state which intervenes between the absolute affliction of any great calamity, and that peace to which, by the benevolent arrangements of Heaven, even melancholy itself ultimately leads. As it is nearer to the time of the calamity, and the consequent profound affliction,—the melancholy itself is more profound, and gradually softens into tranquillity, after a period, that is in some degree proportioned to the violence of the affliction.

The power of time, in removing the burden of sorrow from the afflicted mind, when the ordinary topics of consolation are comparatively ineffective, is truly wonderful. But how is it, that time produces this effect?

A very easy solution of it, is sometimes attempted by the analogy of bodily pains and pleasures, which become more tolerable in the one case, and less delightful in the other case, when long continued; and the analogy must be admitted to a considerable extent—but is far from affording the complete solution required. We feel bodily pain, indeed, less acutely, after long torture, because our nervous frame is oppressed by the continued suffering. But in the case of grief, there is not this oppression; and when we have ceased to grieve for one calamity, we are still as susceptible as before of the emotion itself, and require only some new calamity, to feel again, with the same acuteness, all the agony which we suffered.

It is not mere corporeal exhaustion, therefore, that can account for the diminution of sorrow. It is because the source of the sorrow itself

is removed as it were at a distance, and has admitted, in the meanwhile, of various soothing associations ; and, still more, of various other emotions, which, without any relation to our grief itself, have modified and softened it, by exciting an interest that was incompatible with it, or rather that changed its very nature, by the union with it which they may have formed.

The melancholy emotion, which remains after any great affliction, —after the death, for example, of a husband or a child, is of course, when recent, combined with few feelings that do not harmonize with the grief itself, and augment it, perhaps, rather than diminish it. In a short term, however, from the mere unavoidable events of life, other feelings, suggested by these events, combine with that melancholy, with which they co-exist, so as to form with it one complex state of mind. When the melancholy remembrance recurs, it recurs, therefore, not as it was before, but as modified by the combination of these new feelings. In the process of time, other feelings, that may casually, but frequently co-exist with it, combine with it in like manner ; the complex state of mind partaking thus gradually less and less of the nature of that pure affliction, which constituted the original sorrow, till at length it becomes so much softened and diversified by repeated combinations, as scarcely to retain the same character, and to be rather sadness, or a sort of gentle tenderness, than affliction. The co-existence of the melancholy thought, when it recurs, with other new feelings that may be accidentally excited at the time, constitutes, then, I conceive, one of the chief circumstances on which the softening influence depends.

It must be remembered, too, as a very strong circumstance additional, that the effect is not confined to the *direct feeling itself*, but that every surrounding object which before was associated, perhaps chiefly with the object of regret, and recalled this object more frequently than any other, becomes afterwards associated with other objects, which it recalls more frequently than the object of regret, in consequence of that secondary law of suggestion, by which feelings, recently co-existing or proximate, rise again more readily in mutual succession.

There is scarcely an object which can meet a father's eye, soon after the death of his child, which does not bring that child before him ; thus aggravating, at every moment, the sorrow which was felt the very moment preceding. If, even at this period of recent affliction, we could, by any contrivance, prevent these melancholy suggestions, by suggestions of a different kind, it is evident, that we should not

merely prevent the aggravations of distress which they occasion, but could not fail even to alleviate what was felt before, by the revival of thoughts and emotions, which would have no peculiar relation to the object lost. This, which we cannot by any contrivance completely produce, is the effect which *time* necessarily produces, by rendering stronger the suggestion of recent objects and events, and thus making every thing which meets our eyes, a memorial of every thing more than of him whom we lament. What time more fully produces, is produced, in some degree, by mere change of scene,—especially if the country through which we pass be new to us,—and is produced evidently in both cases, by the operation of the same principle.

Another very abundant source of the misery which is felt, in such a recent affliction, is the relation of the object lost to all the plans which have engaged us, and all the hopes which we have been forming. These, as the recent objects of thought, and its liveliest objects, must, of course, by the operation of the common laws of suggestion, frequently arise to the mind. They all now, however, seem frustrated, and our whole life, as it were, in those feelings which alone constituted life to us, suddenly rent or broken. He who listens to the lamentations of a disconsolate parent, for the loss of an only child, cannot fail to perceive how much of the affliction depends on this very circumstance, and how readily the delightful cares of education in past years, and the equally delightful hopes of years that were to come, arise to embitter the anguish of the present. These cares and hopes must then arise, indeed, because they were the chief feelings with which the mind has been occupied. In the progress of time, however, other cares and other hopes, unconnected with the lost object of regard, must necessarily engage the mind; and these, as more recent, arise, of course, more readily by suggestion, and thus fill—not the busy hours of action only, but the very hours of meditation and repose.

On these causes combined, I conceive the soothing influence of time to depend. The melancholy is less frequently excited, because fewer objects now recall it, and it is at the same time gentler when it is excited; because it rises now, mingled, as it were, with other feelings that have at different times co-existed with it, and modified it; and these circumstances, if they be not sufficient to account for the tranquillity, or serene grief, which ultimately arises, must at least be allowed to be circumstances that concur powerfully with whatever other unknown circumstance may be instrumental in producing the same happy influence.



Of the facts which this theory of the mollifying influence of time assumes, there can no question. The same principle, by which the objects that surround us were originally connected with the conception of the object of our regret, must, of course, continue its operation, when that object itself has ceased to exist, and must connect new objects, therefore, as it before connected the past. In like manner the principle which led to the combination of feelings that gave peculiar vividness to any one of our emotions, must continue to combine new feelings with the very affliction; and to combine new feelings with it is in some degree to alter its nature, in the same way as the thousand offices of kindness, to which reciprocal friendship gives occasion, alter continually, by augmenting with their own united influence, those simple feelings of regard in which the friendship had its origin.

Such, then, is the bountiful provision of Heaven, that man cannot long be wretched, from griefs to which his own guilt has not led,—and that sorrow, even though it had nothing else to comfort it, derives a never-failing comfort from that very continuance of affliction, which, but for our experience, might have seemed capable only of aggravating it. Time is truly *the comforter*, at once lessening the tendency to suggestion of images of sorrow, and softening that very sorrow when the images arise.

### SECTION III.—*Wonder at what is New and Strange.—Uneasy Languor when the same Unvaried Feelings have long continued.*

The next in our arrangement of immediate emotions, involving no moral affection, is our feeling of *Wonder* at what is *new* and *strange*, and of uneasy languor when the same unvaried feelings have long continued.

Long before we are capable of philosophizing on the different *states* of our mind, in different circumstances, or even of preserving any distinct memory of these states, for subsequent speculations on their nature, we have already become familiar with many of the most important successions of events in that part of the physical universe, with which we are immediately connected, so that it is impossible for us to form any conjecture which can be said to approach to certainty, as to the positive nature of our primary feelings, when these successions of events were first observed by us. It seems most probable, however, that the feeling of wonder, which now attends any striking event that

is unexpected by us, would not arise in the infant mind, on the occurrence of events, all of which might be regarded as equally new to it; since wonder implies not the mere feeling of novelty, but the knowledge of some other circumstances which were expected to occur, and is, therefore, I conceive, inconsistent with absolute ignorance.

At present, with the experience which we have acquired of the order of physical changes, the situation of the mind is very different, on the occurrence of any seeming irregularity. The phenomena of nature are conceived by us, not as separate events, but as uniformly consequent in certain series. We, therefore, do not only see the present, but, *seeing* the present, we *expect* the future. When the circumstances, which we observe in any case, are very similar to the circumstances formerly observed by us, we anticipate the future with confidence,—when the circumstances are considered different, but have many strong similarities to the past, we make the same anticipation, but not with confidence,—and if the event should prove to be different from the event anticipated by us, we treasure it up, for regulating our future anticipations in similar circumstances; but we do this without any emotion of astonishment at the new event itself. It is when we have anticipated with confidence, and our anticipation has been disappointed by some unexpected result, that the astonishment arises, and arises always, with greater or less vividness of feeling, according to the strength of that belief which the expectation involved.

When new and striking objects occur, therefore, in any of the physical trains of events,—or when familiar objects occur to us, in situations in which we are far from expecting to find them, a certain emotion arises, to which we give the name of *astonishment*, or *surprise*, or *wonder*, but which, whatever the name may be, is truly the same state of mind,—at least, as an emotion, the same;—though different names may be given, with distinctive propriety, to this one emotion,—when combined or not combined with a process of rapid intellectual inquiry, or with other feelings of the same class.

When the emotion arises simply, for instance, it may be termed, and is more commonly termed, *surprise*;—when the surprise, thus excited by the unexpected occurrence, leads us to dwell upon the object which excited it, and to consider, in our mind, what the circumstances may have been, which have led to the appearance of the object, the surprise is more commonly termed *wonder*, which, as we may dwell on the object long, and consider the possibilities of many circumstances, that may have led to the unexpected introduction of it,

is of course more lasting than the instant surprise which was only its first stage.

Still, however, though the terms in this sense be not strictly synonymous, but expressive of states, more or less complex, the *wonder* differs from the *surprise*, only by the new elements which are added to this primary emotion, and not by any original diversity of the emotion itself. Whether it be a familiar object, which we perceive in unexpected circumstances, or an object that is itself as new as it is unexpected, the first feeling of astonishment,—which is the emotion now considered by us,—is the same in kind, however different the series of subsequent feelings may be. We may feel, for example, only the momentary surprise itself, or we may begin to consider what circumstances are the most likely to have occasioned the presence of the object, and our surprise is, by this union of uncertain and fluctuating thought, converted into *wonder*,—or we may be struck at the same time with the beauty or grandeur of the new object, and our mixed emotion of the novelty and beauty combined, will obtain the name of *admiration*,—the simple primary emotion, which we term *surprise* or *astonishment*, being in all these cases the same, and being only modified by the feelings of various kinds, that afterwards arise and co-exist with it.

The importance of our susceptibility of this emotion of surprise at things unexpected, as a part of our mental constitution, is very obvious. It is in new circumstances that it is most necessary for us to be upon our guard; because, from their novelty, we cannot be aware of the effects that attend them, and require, therefore, more than usual caution, where foresight is impossible. But, if new circumstances had not produced feelings peculiarly vivid, little regard might have been paid to them, and the evil, therefore, might have been suffered, before alarm was felt. Against this danger nature has most providentially guarded us. We cannot feel surprise, without a more than ordinary interest in the objects which may have excited this emotion, and a consequent tendency to pause, till their properties have become, in some degree, known to us. Our *astonishment* may thus be considered as a voice from that Almighty Goodness, which constantly protects us, that, in circumstances, in which inattention might be perilous, whispers, or almost cries to us, Beware!

Of a kind very different from astonishment, which implies unexpected novelty, is the emotion of *weary and languid uneasiness* which we feel from the long continuance of one unvaried object, or from a suc-

cession of objects so nearly similar, as scarcely to appear varied. Even objects that originally excited the highest interest, if long continued, cease to interest, and soon become painful. Who, that is not absolutely deaf, could sit for a whole day in a music-room, if the same air, without any variation, were begun again in the very instant of its last note? The most beautiful couplet of the most beautiful poem, if repeated to us without intermission, for a very few minutes, would excite more uneasiness than could have been felt from a single recitation of the dullest stanza of the most soporific inditer of rhymes. By a little wider extension of this principle, we may perceive, how the very excellence of a work of genius often operates against it, in the later estimation which we form of it. What is intrinsically excellent, may, indeed, admit of being frequently perused, without any diminution, or, perhaps, even with increase of pleasure,—a circumstance which has been assigned as a distinguishing mark of excellence in works of this sort. But there are limits to this susceptibility of repeated perusal with delight; and if a work be very excellent,—especially if the work be comprised in small compass,—we are in great danger of passing these limits, till it become too familiar to us to give us any direct pleasure; and, if it were not for our remembrance of the pleasure which we formerly received, we might be led to think it incapable of giving us very high delight, merely because it has given us so much delight, as to have wearied us with the too frequent voluntary repetition of it.

What works of genius gain with the multitude by extensive diffusion of the admiration which they excite when very popular, they thus often lose, in its intensity, as a permanent feeling of individuals. How weary are we of many of the lines of our best poets, which are quoted to us forever, by those who read only what others quote; and the same remark may be made as to those longer passages, or whole pieces, which are collected in the volumes of so many publishers of *beauties*, as they term them, who see only the beauties which others have seen, and extract, therefore, and collect only what their compiling predecessors have extracted and collected—presenting to us, very nearly the same volumes, with little more than the difference of the order of the pages. What we admired when we read it first, fatigues and disappoints us when we meet with it so often; and the author appears to us almost trite and common, in his most original images, merely because these images are so very beautiful, as to have become some of the common-places of rhetorical selection. He gains, indeed, by this *ubiquity*, many admirers, whom he otherwise would not have

found ; but he loses probably more than he gains, by the diminished pleasure which he affords to the few whose approbation is far more than equal in value to the homage of a multitude of dull admirers.

In travelling over a flat country, amid unvaried scenery, how weary does the mind become ! and what refreshment would a single eminence give, that might show us, at a distance, rivers, and woods, and villages, and lakes, or perhaps the ocean, still more remote ; or at least something more than a few hedge-rows, which, if they show us anything, seem to show us constantly the same meadow which they have been showing us for miles before. Notwithstanding our certainty, that a road, without one turn, must lead us sooner to our journey's end, it would be to our mind, and thus indirectly to our body also, which is soon weary when the mind is weary, the most fatiguing of all roads. A very long avenue is sufficiently wearying, even when we see the house which is at the end of it. But what patience could travel for a whole day, along one endless avenue, with perfect paralelism of the two straight lines, and with trees of the same species and height, succeeding each other exactly at the same intervals ? In a journey like this, there would be the same comfort in being blind, as there would be in a little temporary deafness, in the case before imagined, of the same unvaried melody endlessly repeated in a music-room.

The great utility of this uneasiness, that arises from the uniformity of impressions, which may even have been originally pleasing, it is surely superfluous for me to point out. Man is formed, not for rest, but for action ; and if there were no weariness on a repetition of the past, the most general of all motives to action would be instantly suspended. We *act*, that is to say, we perform what is new, because we are desirous of some result, which is new ; and we are desirous of the new, because the old, which itself was once new, presents to us no longer the same delight. If the old appeared to us as it once appeared to us, we should rest in it with the most indolent content.

The diminished pleasure, however, fading into positive uneasiness, which thus arises from uniformity of the past, answers, as we have seen, the most benevolent of purposes. It is to our mind, what the corresponding pain of hunger is to our bodily health. It gives an additional excitement, even to the active ; and to far the greater number of mankind, it is perhaps, the only excitement which could rouse them from the sloth of ease, to those exertions, by which their intellectual and moral powers are, in some degree at least, more invigorated,—or by which, notwithstanding all their indifference to the welfare of others,

they are forced to become the unintentional benefactors of that society, to which otherwise they might not have given the labours of a single bodily exertion, or even of a single thought.

#### SECTION IV.—*Of Beauty and its Reverse.*

The emotions of *Beauty*, and the feelings opposed to those of beauty, to which I now proceed, are next to our moral emotions, the most interesting of the whole class. They are emotions, indeed, which, in their effects, either of vice or virtue, may almost be considered as *moral*,—being mingled, if not with our own moral actions, at least in our contemplation of the moral actions of others, which we cannot admire, without making them, in some measure, our own, by that desire of imitating them, which, in such a case, it is scarcely possible for us not to feel,—or which, in like manner, we cannot view with disgust and abhorrence, without some strengthening in ourselves of the virtues, that are opposite to the vices which we consider.

When we speak of the emotion which beauty excites, we speak necessarily of an emotion that is pleasing; for it is only in the case of pleasing emotions that all writers concur in using the name, and only in such cases that the name is used, even by the vulgar, in their common phraseology. It is, in truth only one of the many forms of that joyous delight, which I have ranked as one of the elementary feelings to which our emotions are reducible. The pleasure, then, I may remark, in the first place, is one essential circumstance of the emotion.

Another circumstance, which may not seem so obvious, but which I consider as not less constituent of beauty, in that maturer state of the mind, in which alone we are capable of considering it, is, that we transfer in part, at least, the delight which we feel, and embody it in the object which excited it, whatever that object may have been, combining it, at least partially, with our very conception of the object, as beautiful,—much in the same way as we invest external forms, with the colours which exist as feelings of our own mind, or in our vague conception, and of the sapid or odoriferous substances, that are gratifying to our luxury, we consider as almost present in them, and permanent, some part of the very delight which they afford. I know well, that, philosophically, we consider these sapid and odoriferous substances, merely as

the unknown *causes* of our sensations of sweetness and fragrance ; but I have little doubt, at the same time, that it is only philosophically we do so consider them, and that, while we smell a rose, without thinking of our philosophy, we do truly consider the fragrance, which we are at the moment enjoying, or at least a charm which involves a sort of shadowy resemblance of that peculiar species of delight, to be floating around that beautiful flower, as if existing there, independently of our feeling. We do not, indeed, think of the sensation of fragrance, as existing without, for if we characterized it as a *sensation*, this very judgment would imply a sort of philosophizing on its nature, which is far from taking place in such a moment. But without regarding it as a sensation, and enjoying merely the actual feeling of the moment, we incorporate the charm, as it were, with the colours of the rose, with as little intention of forming this combination, and even with as little consciousness that any such combination is taking place, as when, in vision, we invest the external hardness,—the mere feeling of gentle and limited resistance, which the rosebud gives us as an object of touch, or of muscular compression, with the colours, which are at the moment arising from the affections of a different organ. In the case of *fragrance*, it is more easy for us, indeed, to separate the sensation from the external form with which we combine it,—and to imagine a rose without odour, than in the case of vision, to separate the mere form and hue that mingle as if in one sensation, because there are many objects which we touch, that excite in us no sensations of fragrance ; and so objects of touch which do not excite in us some sensations of colour. The co-existence, is therefore, more uniform, and the subsequent suggestions consequently more uniform and indissoluble in the one case, than in the other. It is much easier for us, accordingly, to persuade those who have never read, or discoursed, or thought, on such subjects, that the feelings of smell and taste are not inherent in their objects, than to persuade them that the actual colours, which form their sensations of vision, are not spread over the surfaces of external things. But the actual investment of external things, with the feelings of our own mind, does take place in our sensitive references to objects without ; and in some cases, as in those of vision, constitutes a union so close, that it is impossible even for our philosophy to break the union while the sensation continues. We know well, when we open our eyes, that whatever affects our eyes, is within the small compass of their orbit ; and yet we cannot look for a single moment, without spreading what we thus visually feel, over whole miles of landscape.

Still, I must repeat, not the slightest doubt is *philosophically* entertained by those, who, when they open their eyes, yield like the vulgar to the temporary illusion—that the colours, thus supposed to be spread over the external scenery, are truly feelings of the mind, of which the external objects, or rather the rays of light that come from them, are merely unknown causes. When questioned on the subject of vision, we state this opinion with confidence, and even with astonishment, that our opinion on the subject, in the present age of philosophy, should be doubted by him who has taken the superfluous trouble of putting such a question. At the very moment, probably, at which we give our answer, we have our eyes fixed on him to whom we address it. His complexion, his dress, are regarded by us as external colours, and we are practically, at the very moment, therefore, belying the very opinion which we profess, and in speculation truly profess, to hold.

These remarks show sufficiently the distinction of our speculative limitation of our feelings to mind, as the only subject of feeling, and our practical diffusion of these very feelings over matter, which, by its nature, is incapable of being the subject of any feeling; and they show, that it is very possible for the same mind to combine both, or rather, that there is no individual, who has accurately made the distinction, that does not, in almost every moment of his life,—and certainly in every moment of vision,—go through that very process of spiritualizing matter, or of diffusing over matter his own sensations, which, in his speculations, appears to him to involve an absolute contradiction.

It is not enough, therefore, to urge, in disproof of any diffusion of our mental feelings over material things, that our feelings are affections of mind, and cannot be affections of matter; since this would be to disprove a fact, which certainly in vision, and, as I conceive, in some degree in our other senses also, is continually taking place, notwithstanding the supposed demonstration of its impossibility.

To apply these remarks to our particular subject.—Beauty, I have said, is necessarily an emotion that is pleasing, and it is an emotion which we diffuse, and combine with our conception of the object that may have excited it. These two circumstances, the pleasing nature of the emotion itself, and the identification of it with the object that excites it, are essential to it, in those years in which alone it can be an object of reflection; and are, as I conceive, the only circumstances that are essential to it, in all its varieties, and in whatever way the emotion itself may be produced. It is true, indeed, that when questioned, precisely as in the case of simple vision, whether we think that the



emotion of beauty is a state or affection of matter, we should have no hesitation, in affirming instantly, that it is a state of the mind, and is absolutely incapable of existing in any substance, that is purely material. All this we should say with confidence, as we say with confidence that colour is an affection of the mind, and only an affection of the mind. Yet still, as in the case of colour, the temporary diffusion of our own feeling over the external objects, would take place as before. The beauty as truly felt, and as reasoned upon, would be in our mind; the beauty, as considered by us at the time of the feeling, would be a delight that seemed to float over the object without—the object which we, therefore, term beautiful, as we term certain other objects red or green—not the mere unknown causes of the feelings which we term redness, or greenness, or beauty,—but objects that are red, and green, and beautiful. Even at the time of the diffusion, however, we do not say, or even think, that we diffuse the *emotion* of beauty, any more than we say or think that we diffuse the *sensations* of colour; for this, as I have said, would be to have philosophized on the nature of the *feelings* or states of a substantial mind; but without any thought of the colours as sensations, or of the beauty as an emotion, we feel them as in the objects that excite them, that is to say, we reflect them from ourselves on the objects. The diffusion may be temporary, indeed, and depend on the actual presence of the object, but still the temporary diffusion does take place; and while the object is before us, it is as little possible for us not to regard it, as permanently beautiful, though no eye were ever to behold it, as it would be for us to regard its colour, as fading the very moment in which we close our eye. Beauty, then is a pleasing emotion, and a delight which we feel, as if diffused over the object which excites it.

When we philosophize on beauty, and separate the delight which is in us from the cause of the delight which is without us, beauty is simply that which excites in us a certain delightful feeling; it is like the greenness or redness of objects, considered separately from our perception of objects,—the greenness and redness, which material objects would have, though no mind sentient of colour were in existence. But still, this is not the beauty which we *feel*; it is only the beauty which we strive in vain to conceive. The external beauty which we feel, involves our very delight reflected on it, and diffused, as much as, in the case of a visual object, it involves our sensations of colour diffused in it; the colour which we reflect, being in our mind, as the charm which we reflect, is also in our mind. In this sense, indeed, that

ancient theory of beauty, which refers it to mind as its source, is a faithful statement of the phenomenon ; since it is our own spiritual delight which we are continually spreading around us,—though, in the sense in which Plato and his followers intended their reference to be understood, it is far from being just, or, at least, far from having been proved to be just. In borrowing, therefore, the language which they use, we do not borrow a mere poetic rhapsody ; but it becomes, with the interpretation which I would give it, the expression of a philosophic truth.

It is the mind, indeed, alone, that, in the view which I have given, is the living fountain of beauty, because it is the mind, which by reflection from itself, embodies in the object, or spreads over it, its own delight. If no eye, that is to say, if no *mind*, were to behold it, what would be the loveliest of those forms, on which we now gaze with rapture, and more than rapture ? A multitude of particles more or less near or remote. It is the *soul* in which these particles, directly or indirectly, excite agreeable feelings, which invests them in return with many seeming qualities that cannot belong to the mere elementary atoms which nature herself has made ; which gives them, in the first place, that unity as a single form, which they do not possess of themselves, since, of themselves, however near they may be in seeming cohesion, they are a multitude of separate and independent corpuscles,—which at the same time, spreads over them the colours, that are more truly the *effect* of our vision than the *cause* of it,—and which diffuses among them still more intimately those charms and graces, which they possess only while we gaze, and without which, when the eyes that animate and embellish them are closed, they are again only a multitude of separate particles, more or less near or remote.

Another distinction to which I have alluded, and which, though apparently, and even really a *verbal* one, is a distinction of great importance, in its influence on our assent,—is the difference of the phrases, *colour*, and *sensation of colour*,—*beauty*, and *emotion of beauty*. When we speak of colour or beauty *simply*, we speak of what we feel, without considering any thing more than the feeling itself. When we speak of the *sensation* of colour, and of the *emotion* of beauty, we speak of those feelings, with reference to the mind ; and, though colour, as felt by us, must of course be the *sensation* of colour, and beauty, as felt by us, be the *emotion* of beauty, it appears to us a very different proposition, to state, that in vision, we combine our sensation of colour with external things, or our emotion of beauty with external

things, and to say simply that we combine with them colour and beauty. We combine them, without knowing that we are combining them, consequently without thinking that the one is a *sensation*, the other an *emotion*, and both affections of mind alone. To think of them as a sensation and emotion, would be to have formed already the philosophic judgment, which separates them from the object, not the mere momentary sentiment, which combines them with it. In the case of vision, there can be no doubt that this is done every moment, by the lowest of the people, who have not the slightest suspicion that the colour, or rather the *cause* of colour, as it exists without, is different from that redness or blueness, which they think they see spread over the surface of objects; and it is not wonderful, therefore, that, in combining, in our notion of the beautiful object, the delightful feeling of our mind, we should do this, with as little suspicion, that the delight, which we have diffused over the object itself, is our own internal emotion.

That, in thinking of a beautiful object, we do consider some permanent delight as diffused, and, as it were, embodied in it, is evident, on the slightest reflection on the objects which we term beautiful. And yet, when we first think of this diffusion of a mental feeling over a material object,—if we have not been in the habit of attending to other phenomena of the mind,—the very supposition of such a process may seem to involve an assumption, that is scarcely warrantable; precisely as the uneducated multitude,—and, perhaps, a very great majority of the smaller multitude, who *are* educated, would smile, with something more than unbelief, if we were to endeavour to make them acquainted with that part of the theory of vision, which relates to colour. But to those who have been in the habit of considering the mental phenomena in general, and particularly the phenomena commonly ascribed to association,—the diffusion of this feeling, and combination of it with our notion of the cause of feeling, will seem only an instance of a very general law of our mental constitution. It is, indeed, only an instance of that general tendency to condensation of feelings, which gives the principal value to every object that is familiar to us,—to the home of our infancy,—to the walks of our youth,—to every gift of friendship,—nor only to these inanimate things, but, in a great measure, also, to the living objects of our affection,—to those who watched over our infant slumbers, or who were the partners of our youthful walks. The friend whom we have long loved, is, at each single moment, what he has been to us in many successive years. Without recalling to us the particular events of these years, he recalls to us their delights; or

rather, the very notion which we form of him contains in itself this diffused pleasure, like some ethereal and immortal spirit of the past.

Nor is it only in our moral affection, for beings living like ourselves, and capable, therefore, of feeling and returning our kindness, that this condensation of regard takes place. It produces an affection of almost moral sympathy, when there can be no feeling of it, and therefore, no possibility of return ; and where that softening influence, accordingly, must be wholly reflected from our own mind. That, for inanimate objects, long familiar to us, we have a regard, in some degree similar to that which we feel for a *friend*, has been the remark of all ages ; since every individual, in every age, must have been subject to the universal influence, which gives occasion to it. A little attention to this process, by which an object, of trifling value, becomes representative of feelings that are inestimable, will not be uninteresting in itself, and will throw much light on that similar process, by which, in the case of beauty, I conceive objects to become representative, by a sort of spiritual reflection, of the pleasure which they excite. The following quotation is from Dr. Smith.

“The causes of pain and pleasure, whatever they are, or however they operate, seem to be the objects, which, in all animals, immediately excite those two passions of gratitude and resentment. They are excited by inanimate, as well as by animated objects. We are angry, for a moment, even at the stone that hurts us. A child beats it, a dog barks at it, a cholerick man is apt to curse it. The least reflection, indeed, corrects this sentiment, and we soon become sensible, that what has no feeling is a very improper object of revenge. When the mischief, however, is very great, the object which caused it becomes disagreeable to us ever after, and we take pleasure to burn or destroy it. We should treat in this manner the instrument which had accidentally been the cause of the death of a friend ; and we should often think ourselves guilty of a sort of inhumanity, if we neglected to vent this absurd sort of vengeance upon it.

“We conceive, in the same manner, a sort of gratitude for those inanimate objects, which have been the causes of great or frequent pleasure to us. The sailor, who, as soon as he got ashore, should mend his fire with the plank upon which he had just escaped from a shipwreck, would seem to be guilty of an unnatural action. We should expect that he would rather preserve it with care and affection, as a monument that was, in some measure, dear to him. A man grows fond of a ~~snuff-box~~, of a ~~penknife~~, of a ~~staff~~, which he has long made

use of, and conceives something like a real love and affection for them. If he breaks or loses them, he is vexed out of all proportion to the value of the damage. The house which we have long lived in, the tree whose verdure and shade we have long enjoyed, are both looked upon with a sort of respect that seems due to such benefactors. The decay of the one, or the ruin of the other, affects us with a kind of melancholy, though we should sustain no loss by it. The Dryads and the Lares of the ancients, a sort of genii of trees and houses, were probably first suggested by this sort of affection, which the authors of those superstitions felt for such objects, and which seemed unreasonable, if there was nothing animated about them." \*

The reason of this friendship for inanimate objects, seems to me to be, that, with such objects, in the circumstances supposed, there is really combined a great part of that which forms the complex conception of our friend; and it is not wonderful, therefore, that there should be a considerable similarity of the feeling excited. There is not, indeed, and cannot be, in the case of lifeless matter, that admiration of virtue and genius,—that gratitude for a preference voluntarily made, and for kindness voluntarily shown,—and that confidence in future displays of similar devotion,—which form so gratifying and ennobling a part of friendship. But what constitutes the real tenderness of friendship, is something more than all these feelings. These may be felt, in attachments that are formed at any period of life, and at a very early period of mutual acquaintance. But that, which gives to such a union its chief tenderness, is long and cordial intimacy, and especially that intimacy, which has taken its origin in an early period of life. The friend of our boyish sports—of our college studies—of our first schemes, and successes, and joys, and sorrows, is he, in whose converse the heart expands most readily, and with whom, in latest old age, we love to grow young again. With the very image of the person, is mingled the remembrance of innumerable enjoyments and consolations shared in common. They are, as it were, condensed and fixed in it, and are reflected back upon us, as often as the image arises. But the remembrance of a long series of agreeable emotions may be mingled with inanimate scenes, as well as with persons; and if, by the reflection of these past emotions, it produce tenderness, in the one case, it surely is not surprising, that the same cause should produce a feeling of tenderness, in the other; and that, as the chief source of the affection is

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\* Theory of Moral Sentiments, Part II. Sect. iii. Chap 1.

thus in circumstances that are common to both, we should feel something very like regard for every long familiar object, while it exists, and of grief, when it exists no more.

The old man who pointed out the house of a deceased friend, and said, "Formerly I had only to climb those steps, to forget all the miseries of life," must have felt for the *steps*, which he had so often trod, that regard, which arises from the remembrance of past delight,—a remembrance, which constituted so important a part of the pleasure formerly received by him, when they led him to the apartment of his friend, and to all that happiness, which was more than the mere forgetfulness of grief, even when there was grief, or the very miseries of life, to be forgotten.

The same effect in heightening friendship, which is produced by long intimacy, is produced, in a great degree, by any single feeling of very vivid interest ; such as that of peril shared together,—the strong emotion of the moment of enterprise,—the joy of the escape,—and, in many cases, the glory which attended it, being blended and reflected from each individual, as from another self. In one of those admirable tragedies, which form a part of the series of plays on the Passions, there is a very striking picture of this kind, in the speech of an old maimed soldier, who, with all his modesty, has been forced to allude to some of his past exploits.

"For I have fought where few alive remain'd,  
And none unscathed ; where but a few remain'd,  
Thus marr'd and mangled ;—as belike you've seen,  
O' summer nights, around the evening lamp,  
Some wretched moths, wingless and half consumed,  
Just feebly crawling o'er their heaps of dead.  
In Savoy, on a small, though desperate post,  
Of full three hundred goodly chosen men,  
But twelve were left ;—*and right dear friends were we*  
*Forever after.* They are all dead now ;—  
I'm old and lonely." \*

In a real case of this sort, every vivid feeling which attended the action,—and the remembrance of which was, in a great measure, the remembrance of the action itself,—would be combined with the perception of each individual survivor. The common peril, the common escape, the common glory, would be conceived as one ; and, in con-

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\* Count Basil, a Tragedy, Act III. Scene 1.

sequence of this unity, as often as the thought of the glorious action recurred, each would be to the others as it were, another self.

The same feeling in this case, too, it must be remarked, extends itself, if not equally, at least in a very high degree, to inanimate things; and there can be no question, that the sword which has been worn only as an ornament, and the sword which has been often wielded in battle, and in battle the most perilous, will be viewed by their possessors with very different regard. The weapon is itself a real component part of the glorious actions which it represents; and we transfuse, as it were, into the mere lifeless steel, a consciousness and reciprocity of our vivid feelings, exactly as, in the case of beauty, we animate the external object with our own delight, without knowing that we have done so.

An object long familiar to us, by occurring frequently, either in perception, or in trains of thought, together with many of our most interesting emotions, and the images of those friends of whom we think most frequently, is, by the common laws of suggestion, so clearly associated with these emotions and ideas, that when it is present to our mind, these shadowy images of happiness may almost be considered as forming with it a part of one complex feeling, or at least are very readily recalled by it. When such an object, therefore, is lost, and we think of it as lost, we do not conceive it as that simple object of perception which it was originally, when it first affected our senses,—in which case, the loss of it could not be very seriously regarded by us—but we conceive it, as that complex whole, which it has become—the image or representation of many delightful feelings.

It is in a great measure, then, by the momentary belief of the loss of more than the object itself, that I would explain that disproportioned emotion, which is felt to be absurd, yet is not felt the less on account of this seeming absurdity.

It is of external objects, and particularly of objects of *sight*, that we think most frequently, when we speak or hear of beauty; but this does not arise from any exclusive peculiarity of the feeling excited by these objects, as if the term were only metaphorically applied to others, but because external objects are continually around us, so as more frequently to excite the emotion of beauty; and in a great measure, too, because the human form, itself an object of vision, is representative to us of the presence of all which we love,—of those with whom our life is connected, and from whom its happiness has been derived, or from whom we hope to derive it. It is not wonderful, therefore, that when we think of beauty, we should think of that by which the emotion is most vividly excited, and should be led accordingly to seek it there.

That we are susceptible of a similar delightful emotion from works of *intellect*, is sufficiently shown by the fine arts, which are founded on this happy susceptibility ; nor is the delight felt, only on the contemplation of works of fancy,—at least of fancy in the sense in which that term is commonly employed ; it is felt in the result of faculties, that seem, while exercised in the operations that produce the beautiful result, to be very foreign from every emotion, but that tranquil satisfaction which may be supposed to constitute a part of our assent to any interesting truth. How many theorems are there, to which a mathematician applies the term *beautiful*, as readily as it is applied by others to the design or the colouring of a picture, or to the words or air of a song ; and though the delightful emotion which he expresses by that word is at once far inferior in degree, and only analogous in kind to the emotion excited by those objects, it still is so analogous as to deserve the denomination. In general physics, in like manner, how instantly do we speak of the *beauty* of an *experiment*, which is so contrived as to decide a point that has been long in controversy, by very simple means, and with the exclusion of every foreign circumstance that might affect the accuracy of the result,—or of the beauty of a theory, which brings together many facts that were before dispersed, without any obvious bond of union, and exhibits them in luminous connexion to our view. The delightful emotion, in these intellectual forms of beauty, is, it will be admitted, far less lively, than when it results from external things. But when we thus apply the term beautiful to the works of faculties, that are not immediately conversant with beauty, or in which, at least, beauty is scarcely even a secondary consideration, we are far from using a metaphor, any more than we use a metaphor, when we employ the same word in speaking of the beauty of a landscape, and of the beauty of human form, which are both objects of sight, but of which the resulting emotions, though analogous, are far from being the same. We employ the term, because, from the analogy of the delight in the different cases, it is the only term which can express our meaning ; we do truly feel, on the contemplation of such intellectual works, a delightful emotion,—as we feel a delightful emotion very similar, however superior it may be in intensity of pleasure, when we look on the charms of nature, or the imitative creations of art ; and, as we conceive the very charm which we feel to be diffused and stored in those beautiful forms on which we gaze, so does the charm which we feel, seem, for the moment, to flow over the severest works of intellect, in the conceptions which are embodied to us. Even reason itself, austere as



it may seem, is thus only a part of Beauty's universal empire that extends over mind, and over matter, with equal sway.

But though by some minds, which have not been conversant with the beautiful results of scientific inquiry, these severe and less obvious charms may not be readily admitted,—of *moral* beauty, it is surely impossible for any one to doubt that charm, which is felt by us, even before we have learned to distinguish virtue by its name ; and which, even to the guilty, who have abandoned it, still retains a sort of *dreadful loveliness*, which they would gladly forget, but which no effort can wholly banish from their remembrance, that is forced still to shudder and admire. It is the analogy of this moral beauty, indeed, which gives its most attractive charm to the beauty of the inanimate universe, and which adorns poetry with its most delightful images. To give our mere approbation to virtue, as we give our assent to any truth of reasoning, seems to be as little possible, as for those who are not blind, to open their eyes, in the very sunshine of noon, on some delightful scene, and to view it as a mere collection of forms without any colouring. The softer moral perfections, so essential to the happiness, and almost to the very existence of society, are like those mild lights, and gentle graces, in the system of external things, without which the repose of nature would not be *tranquillity*, but *death*, and its motions, in the waving bough, and the foamy waterfall, and the stream that glides from it, would be only the agitation of contiguous particles of matter.

In all cases of *moral* beauty, as in that to which our senses more immediately give rise, we conceive the delight which we feel, to be centered in the moral object ; and the very diffusion of the delight seems to connect us more closely with that which we admire, producing what is not a mere sympathy, but something more intimate,—that union of mind with mind, in reflected and mingled feeling,—which, notwithstanding all the absurd mysticism that has been written concerning it, has, in the manner which I have now described, in part at least, a foundation in nature.

That certain circumstances modify our emotions of beauty, there can be no doubt ;—and even that they produce the feeling, when there is every reason to believe, that but for such circumstances, no emotion of the kind would have been excited. The influence of what is called *fashion*, in giving a temporary beauty to various forms, is a most striking proof of this flexibility of our emotion ; and it is a fact too obvious to require illustration by example.

"If an European," says Sir J. Reynolds, in one of his discourses delivered at the Royal Academy, "if an European, when he has cut off his beard, and put false hair on his head, or bound up his own natural hair in regular hard knots, as unlike nature as he can possibly make it; and after having rendered them immovable by the help of the fat of hogs, has covered the whole with flour, laid on by a machine with the utmost regularity,—if when thus attired, he issues forth, and meets a Cherokee Indian, who has bestowed as much time at *his* toilet, and laid on with equal care and attention his yellow and red ochre, on particular parts of his forehead or cheeks, as he judges most becoming; whoever of these two despises the other for this attention to the fashion of his country, whichever first feels himself provoked to laugh, is *the barbarian*." \*

It is not necessary, however, to have recourse to savage life, to feel how completely the ornamental and the ridiculous in all the adventitious embellishments of fashion, differ only as the eyes which behold them are different. The most civilized European may soon become, in this respect, a Cherokee, and in his nice absurdities of decoration, be himself the very thing at which he would have laughed before.

Weary as we soon become of whatever we have admired, our weariness is not more rapid than our admiration of something *new*, which follows it, or rather precedes it. It seems as if, in order to produce this delightful emotion, nothing more were necessary for us than to say, Let this be beautiful. The power of enchantment is almost verified in the singular transformations which are thus produced; and in many of these, fashion is employed in the very way in which magic has been commonly fabled to be employed,—in making monsters, who are as little conscious of their degradation, while the voluntary metamorphose lasts, as the hideous but unknowing victims of the enchanter's art. A few months, or perhaps even a few weeks, may, indeed, show them what monsters they have been; but what is monstrous in the *past*, is seen only by the unconscious monsters of the present hour, who are again, in a few months, to laugh at their own deformity. What we *are*, in fashion, is ever beautiful; but nothing is in fashion so ridiculous, as the beauty which has been; as in journeying with sunshine before us, what is immediately under our eye, is splendour; but if we look back, we see a long shadow behind us, though all, which is shadow now, was once brilliant, as the very track of brightness along which we move.

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\* Discourse VII.

Yet, even though what is commonly termed *fashion*, the modifier, or creator of general feeling, had not been, it is scarcely possible that we should not have discovered the influence of circumstances, on our individual emotions. Even in the mere scenery of nature, which, in its most majestic features,—its mountains,—its rivers,—its cataracts, seems by its permanence, to mock the power of man; how differently do the same objects affect us, in consequence of the mere antecedents of former feelings, and former events! The hill and the waterfall may be pleasing to every eye; but how doubly beautiful do they seem to the very heart of the expatriated Swiss, who almost looks as he gazes on them, for the cottage of his home, half gleaming through the spray, as if they were the very hill and the waterfall, which had been the haunt of his youth. To the exile, in every situation, what landscape is so beautiful as that which recalls to him, perhaps, the bleakest and dreariest spot of the country, which he has not seen for many dismal years? The softest borders of the lake, the gentle eminences, that seem to rise only to slope into the delightful valleys between,—the fields,—the groves,—the vineyards, in all their luxuriance, these have no beauty to his eye. But let his glance fall on some rock, that extends itself, without one tuft of vegetation; or on some heath or morass, of still more gloomy barrenness; and what was indifference till then, is indifference no more. There is an instant emotion at his heart, which, though others might scarcely conceive it to be that of beauty, is beauty to him; and it is to this part of the scene, that his waking eye most frequently turns; as it is it alone which he mingles in his dreams, with the well-remembered scenery of other years.

That our emotion of beauty, which arises from works of art, is susceptible of modification, by accidental circumstances, is equally evident. There are tastes in composition, of which we are able to fix the period, almost with the same accuracy as we fix the dates of any of those great events, which fill our tables of chronology. What is green or scarlet to the eyes of the infant, is green or scarlet to the same eyes in boyhood, in youth, in mature manhood, in old age; but the work of art, which gives delight to the boy, may excite no emotion, but that of contempt or disgust, in the man. It must be a miserable ballad indeed, which is not read or heard with interest, in our first years of curiosity; and every dauber of a village sign-post, who knows enough of his art, to give four legs and not two merely, to his red lion, or blue bear, is sure of the admiration of the little critic, who stops his hoop or his top to gaze on the wonders of his skill.

Even in the judgments of our maturer years, when our discernment of beauty has been quickened by frequent exercise ; and the study of the works of excellence of every age, has given us a corresponding quickness, in discerning the opposite imperfections, which otherwise we might not have perceived—how many circumstances are there, of which we are, perhaps, wholly unconscious, that modify our general susceptibility of the emotions of this class ! Our youth, our age, our prevailing or temporary passions, the peculiar admiration which we may feel for some favourite author, who has become a favourite, perhaps, from circumstances that had little relation to his general merit, may all concur, with other circumstances as contingent, in giving diversity to sentiments, which otherwise might have been the same.

If the emotion of beauty, which we receive from external things, and works of intellectual art, be thus under the control of our passions and remembrances, the pleasure of *moral beauty* is also, in some measure, under the same control. The great principles of moral distinction are indeed, too deeply fixed in our breast, by our Divine Author, to allow approbation and pleasure to be attached to the contemplation of pure malignity, or withheld from pure benevolence. When evil is admired, therefore, it is in consequence of some disproportionate admiration attached to some real or supposed accompanying good ; but still it is in the power of circumstances, to produce this disproportionate admiration, and consequently to modify in a great degree, the resulting emotion of moral beauty. In one age, or in one country, the self-denying virtues are held in highest estimation,—in another age, or another country, the gentler social affections. There are periods of society, in which *valour*,—that gave virtue its name in the early ethics of one mighty people,—constitutes almost the whole of that national virtue, which commands general reverence, at the expense of the calmer and far nobler virtues of peace. There are other systems of polity, in which these civil virtues rise to their just pre-eminence ; and in which *valour* is admired, less for its absolute unthinking intrepidity, than for its relation to the sacred rights, of which it is the guardian, or the avenger.

It seems impossible, then, to contend for any beauty that is absolutely fixed and invariable. That general susceptibility of the emotion, sensitive, intellectual, and moral, which forms a part of our mental constitution, is, it appears, so modified by the circumstances in which individuals are placed, that objects, which, but for these circumstances, would not have appeared beautiful to us, do seem beautiful ; and that other objects, from the same cause, cease to give that delight which

they otherwise would have produced. It is obviously, therefore, impossible to determine, with perfect certainty, the great point in question as to original beauty; since, whatever our primary original feelings may have been, they must, by the influence of such modifying circumstances, that are operating from the very moment of our birth, be altogether diversified, before we are able to speculate concerning them, and, perhaps, even in the infant, before any visible signs of his emotions can be distinctly discovered.

Since we cannot, then, decide with confidence, either affirmatively or negatively, in such circumstances, all which remains, in sound philosophy, is a comparison of mere probabilities. Do these, however, lead us to suppose, that, originally, all objects are equally capable of receiving the primary influences of arbitrary or contingent circumstances, which alone determine them to be beautiful? or do they not rather indicate original tendencies in the mind, in consequence of which it more readily receives impressions of beauty from certain objects than from others.

It must not be supposed, in an inquiry of this kind, that we are to look to those high delights which beauty, in its most attractive forms, affords; for, though it may be false, that all the pleasure of beauty is derived from adventitious circumstances, it is certainly true at least, that our most valuable pleasures of this class are derived from circumstances, with which our imagination has learned to embellish objects. The only reasonable question is, not whether the chief emotions, which we now term emotions of beauty, be referable to this source, but whether we must necessarily refer to it every emotion of this class, of every species and degree.

If, then, in our estimate of mere probabilities, we attend to the signs which the infant exhibits, almost as soon as objects can be supposed to be known to him, it is scarcely possible not to suspect, at least, that some emotions of this kind, are felt by him. The brilliant colours, in all their variety of gaudiness, which delight the child and the savage, may not, indeed, be the same which give most gratification to our refined sensibility; but still they do give to the child, as they give to the savage, a certain gratification, and a gratification which we should perhaps, still continue to feel, if our love of mere gaudy colouring were not overcome by the delight which, in after life, we receive from other causes that are inconsistent with this simple pleasure—a delight arising from excellencies, which the child and the savage have not had skill to discern, but which, when discerned, produce the impression of

beauty, in the same manner as the brilliant varieties of colour, perhaps, that are as easily distinguished, and, therefore, instantly felt to be beautiful. What child is there, who, in a toyshop, does not prefer the gaudiest toy, if all other circumstances of attraction are the same? or rather, to what child are not this very glare and glitter the chief circumstances of attraction? and in what island of savages have our circumnavigators found the barbarian to differ in this respect from the child? The refined critic may indeed feel differently; but this does not arise from defect of that original tendency to receive a pleasing emotion from the contemplation of those brilliant patchworks of colours, which, though he has learned to regard them as tawdry, he would, in other circumstances have admired with the savage, but from the developement of tendencies to receive pleasure from other causes, which are inconsistent with this earlier delight,—tendencies which are original, like the other, existing in the mind of the savage as much as in his own more cultivated mind, but existing there inertly, because circumstances have not arisen to develop them.

I have said, that from the undoubted effect of circumstances, in modifying our original tendencies, and of circumstances that may, in some degree, have operated before we are capable of ascertaining their influence, it is only an estimate of probabilities to which our inquiry can lead. In vision, however, as far back as we can trace the emotion of beauty, some original emotion of this kind does seem to be felt in colours, and varied arrangements of colours; and if from vision we pass to that sense which is next to it in importance as a source of the feelings, that produce our emotion of beauty, we shall find another tribe of our sensations, that seem in like manner, to favour the supposition of some original beauty, however inferior to those other analogous emotions of delight which are to be the growth of our maturer years. The class to which I allude, are our sensations of sound, a class which seems to me peculiarly valuable for illustration, as showing, I conceive, at once, the influence of original tendencies, and also of the modifying power of contingent circumstances. In different nations, we find different casts of music to prevail; in the variety of these national melodies, therefore, we recognise the power of circumstances in diversifying the original feelings. But to this diversifying power there are limits; for, however different the peculiar spirit of the national melodies may be, we find that in all nations certain successions of sounds alone are regarded as pleasing,—those which admit of certain mathematical proportions in their times of vibration. It is not every series of sounds, then, that is capable of

exciting the emotion of beauty, but only certain series, however varied these may be. The universality of this law of beauty in one of our senses, in which delight is felt from mere arrangements or successions of sounds, is a ground of presumption, at least, that all beauty is not wholly contingent, and affords analogies, which, not as proofs, indeed, but simply as analogies, may fairly be extended to the other senses.

Even that fine species of beauty, which is to be found in the expression of character, in animated forms, at least if we admit that species of silent language, which has been called the language of natural signs, does not seem to be, in all its varieties, absolutely dependent on the mental associations of the being who beholds it. These connexions, indeed, of the corporeal signs of mental qualities, with the qualities which they have been found to express, give to the beauty that is admired by us, in our maturer years, its principal power; but though many, and perhaps the far greater number of these signs are unquestionably learned by experience, there seems reason to think, or at least there is no valid ground of positive disbelief, that there are at least some natural signs independent of experience, and equally universal in use and in interpretation. A smiling countenance, for example, appears, if we may judge from the language of his own little features, to be agreeable to the infant, and a frowning countenance to be disagreeable to him, as soon as he is capable of observing the different lineaments or motions which are developed in the smile or frown; though I admit, it would be too much to say, with certainty, that even these signs, which we term natural, may not themselves be acquired by earlier observations than any which we are accustomed to take into account. Yet still, though the interpretation, even in these cases, may, however early, result from still earlier experience only, this has not been proved; nor is it necessary, from the general analogies of mind, to assume it as certain, without particular proof in the particular case. To those, therefore, whose philosophical spirit is easily alarmed by the word *instinct*, as if it expressed a connexion peculiarly mysterious, when in truth, every connexion of one feeling with another, is equally mysterious, or equally free from mystery, and cannot fail to be so regarded by every one who has learned to consider accurately what is meant, even by the most regular antecedences and consequences of the events of nature;—to that class of philosophers, who think that the word *experience* accounts for every thing, without reflecting on what it is that experience itself must primarily have been founded,—it may seem unphilosophic thus to speak of the possible in-

instinctive use, or instinctive interpretation of smiles, or frowns, or signs of any sort. Yet, how many cases are there, in which it is absolutely impossible to deny these very instincts? and cases, too, in which the immediate effect of the instinct, as much as in the supposed case of beauty, is the production of emotion of some sort, or at least of the visible signs of emotion. In some of the lowest of the animals which we have domesticated,—in the cry of the hen, for example, the first time that a bird of prey is seen hovering at a distance, that cry, of which the force is so instantly and so fully comprehended, by the little tremblers that cower beneath her wing, who does not perceive, in this immediate emotion of terror, an interpretation of natural signs, as instinctive as the language of affection that is instinctively used? Such a cry of alarm, indeed, is not necessary to the human mother of the little creature that has a safer shelter continually around him. But there are positive signs of pleasure, of which a delightful emotion may be the immediate consequence, as there are negative signs, which are merely warnings of evil to be shunned, that are followed immediately by an emotion of a different kind; and these additional sources of enjoyment, it is not unworthy of the kindness of Heaven to have communicated to the infant, who may thus feel, in the caress, a delight of more than mere tactual softness. The cry of the parent fowl scarcely seems more quick to be understood, than the smile of the mother to awake in the little heart that throbs within her arms an answering delight; nor is there any philosophic inconsistency in supposing it, whatever error there might be in affirming it positively, to be a part of a natural language of emotion, which, like the undoubted natural language of other animals, is instinctively understood, in every age of life, as in every nation of the globe, and which is already felt as happiness or affection, before the happiness of which it is the promise, can itself have been felt or even anticipated.

Of a still finer species of emotion, perhaps, than even that which arises from looks or features of the living countenance, may be counted the pleasure which is felt from the contemplation of moral beauty; and yet if we trace back this feeling through a series of years, in the progress of individual emotion—though we may find many variations of it in various circumstances—it is far from certain, that we shall find it more lively in manhood, than in the early years of the unreflecting boy. It is not to be expected, indeed, that *moral beauty* is to be felt, before the consequences of actions, which render them to our conception moral, can be appreciated,—or that it is to be felt, but in those very



cases, in which such consequences can be known. There are many offences, therefore, that excite our instant abhorrence, of which a boy cannot feel the moral atrocity,—as there are many virtues, of which he is incapable of feeling the moral charm. But, in virtuous actions, of which the nature can be distinctly conceived by him, he is not the dullest to feel what is lovely,—nor the dullest to feel, mixed with his indignation and his pity, disgust at actions of a different sort. In the ballad which he exults or weeps to hear, he loves and hates with a love and hatred, at least as strong as are felt by those to whom he listens ; and it seems as if, far from requiring any slow growth of circumstances, to mature or develope his emotions, there were nothing more necessary to his feeling of the beauty of an heroic sacrifice, than his knowledge that an act was truly heroic,—and nothing more necessary to his emotions of an opposite kind, than his knowledge that there was cruelty, or ingratitude on earth.

The observations which I have now made on different species of beauty, are not urged, as of evidence sufficient to prove, positively, that we have feelings of beauty, which may be said to be original or independent of accidental associations of every sort ; since this point, as I have already stated, is beyond our power to determine with perfect accuracy, because the mind cannot be a subject of our distinct examination, till many accidental causes, of the power of which, in the peculiar circumstances of the infant mind, we may be without the slightest suspicion, may have modified its original tendencies in the most important respects. The burthen of proof, however, does not rest with the believers, but with the deniers of original beauty ; and since the inquiry has not for its object what may be affirmed with certainty, but merely what may be regarded as more or less probable, even these very slight remarks may perhaps have been sufficient to show the greater probability to be on the side of that opinion, which supposes that all objects are not originally to the mind the same in beauty or deformity, or, to speak more accurately, that all objects are not originally equally incapable of exciting either of these emotions,—but, on the contrary, that though accidental circumstances may produce one or other of these emotions, when, but for the mere accidents, neither of them would have been produced,—or may variously modify, or even reverse in some cases, the original tendencies,—there yet are in the mind some original tendencies, independent of all association,—tendencies to feel the emotion of beauty on the contemplation of certain objects, and the

emotion opposite to that of beauty, on the contemplation of certain other objects.

This latter supposition is rendered, I think, not less, but more certain, by the arguments which are urged against it—arguments that seem to me founded on a very false view of the circumstances that should be expected to follow, if the doctrine against which they are urged were just.

The feeling of beauty, according to my view of it, is not a *sensation*, but an *emotion*, a feeling subsequent to the perception or conception of the object termed beautiful; and which, like other emotions, may, or may not, follow the particular perception or conception, according to the circumstances in which those primary feelings, to which it is only secondary, may have arisen.

It is vain, therefore, to deny,\* that objects, which previously impressed us with no feeling of their beauty, may become beautiful to us, in consequence of associations; that is to say, of former pleasing or unpleasing feelings, peculiar to ourselves—for though it might be absurd to suppose that these former feelings could give us a new sense, it is far from absurd, that the objects of them may become to our minds the subjects of new pleasing emotions—and of emotions similar, perhaps, to those which were formerly excited by other objects. That we are *originally* susceptible of various other emotions is admitted, and even contended, by those who would trace to the suggestion of them our feeling of beauty; and these original susceptibilities, they will surely allow, may, like the susceptibility of beauty, be variously modified, by the circumstances in which the individual may be placed, and may be produced, in consequence of former associations, in circumstances in which they otherwise would not have arisen. There is not a single emotion, indeed, which does not admit of constant modifications in this way. Our love, our hate, our wonder, are at least as much dependent on the nature of our past feelings, as our delight in what seems to us beautiful. Why should this one emotion, then, be expected to differ from our other emotions, which are confessedly capable of being awakened or suspended, in different circumstances, though the mere object of contemplation be the same? To those, accordingly, who, from being accustomed to consider beauty as either permanent and unchangeable in objects, or as absolutely contingent on accidental associations, may find some difficulty in reconciling original beauty, of

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\* Contend, *Edin. Edit.*

any sort or degree, with that influence of circumstances, which may modify it, or overcome it, it may be of some assistance, to consider the analogy of our other emotions. Let us take, for example, our emotions of *desire*—feelings as lively, at least, as our emotion of *beauty*, and in many cases far more lively—which arise in the mind, too, in circumstances in some degree similar,—not on the contemplation of a present delightful object, indeed, like beauty, but on the contemplation of some delight that is future. No one, surely, whatever his opinion may be, as to the original indifference of objects that now seem beautiful, will maintain, that all objects, painful and pleasing, are equally capable, *originally*, of exciting the emotion of desire. Yet no one, I conceive, will deny, that it is in the power of general fashion, or of various accidental circumstances, to render objects desirable, or, in other words, capable of exciting, when contemplated, this emotion of desire, that otherwise would have been not indifferent merely, but perhaps positively disliked; and to make objects cease to be desirable, which would have been highly prized by us, but for the factitious circumstances of society, or accidents that may have operated on ourselves with peculiar influence. There is a *mode* in our very *wishes*, as there is a mode in the external habiliments which we wear; and in their different objects, the passions of different ages and countries are at least as various, as the works of taste, to which they give their admiration. When, at the Restoration, the austerity of the Protectorate was succeeded by the disgraceful profligacy of the royal court, and when there was an immediate change of the desirableness of certain objects, as if our very susceptibilities of original passion had been changed, we do not suppose that any real change took place in the native constitution of man. In every original moral tendency or affection, he was precisely what he was before. In all ages, the race of mankind are born with certain susceptibilities, which, if circumstances were not different, would lead them, as one great multitude, to form very nearly the same wishes; but the difference of circumstances produces a corresponding diversity of passions, that scarcely seems to flow from the same source. In like manner, the race of mankind, considered as a great multitude, might be in all ages endowed with the same susceptibilities of the emotion of beauty, which would lead them, upon the whole, to find the same pleasure, in the contemplation of the same objects,—if different circumstances did not produce views of utility, and associations of various sorts, that diversify the emotion itself. It is the same in different periods of life of the same

individual ; the desirableness of objects varying at least as much as the feeling of beauty. I may add, that, as there seem to be, in individuals, original constitutional tendencies to certain passions rather than to others, so there might be a constitutional difference, with respect to the original susceptibility of the emotion of beauty, that, of itself, might render certain objects more delightful to certain minds than others. But still, when the race of mankind are considered as one great multitude, —as their native original tendencies to passion may be considered as the same,—their native original susceptibilities of the pleasing impressions of beauty, in certain cases, might also have been the same ; though as these original tendencies, if they did exist, might yet admit of being variously diversified, to measure them by any standard, would even in these circumstances, be still as impracticable, as if there were no original tendencies whatever. There is no standard of desire ; and as little, even in these circumstances, should we expect to find an absolute standard of beauty. All of which we might philosophically speak, would be the agreement of the greater number of mankind in certain desires, and the agreement of the greater number of cultivated minds in certain emotions of beauty.

That the feeling of beauty, which so readily arises when the mind is passive, and capable, therefore, of long trains of reverie, should not arise when the mind is busied with other objects of contemplation,—or even in any very high degree, when the mind is employed in contemplating the beautiful object itself, but in contemplating it, with a critical estimation of its merits or defects,—is no proof, as has been supposed, that trains of associate images are essential to the production of the emotion, but is what might very naturally be suspected, though no such trains were at all concerned. The feeling of beauty, it must be remembered, is not, as I have already said, a *sensation*, but an *emotion*. A certain perception must previously exist ; and though the perception may have a tendency to induce that different state of mind which constitutes the emotion, it has a tendency also, by suggestion, to induce many other states, and in certain circumstances, when there are any strong desires in the mind, may induce those other states, which may be accordant with the paramount existing desires, more readily than the emotion which has no peculiar accordance with them. It is the same in this case, too, with our other emotions, as with that of beauty. When we are intent on a train of study, how many objects occur to the mind, which, in other circumstances, would be followed by other emotions,—by various desires, for example,—but which are not followed

by their own specific desires, merely in consequence of our greater interest in the subject, the relations of which we are studying. Nor is this peculiar to our emotions only. It extends in some degree even to our very sensations. In two individuals who walk along the same meadow, the one after suffering some very recent and severe affliction, and the other with a light heart, and an almost vacant mind, how very different, in number and intensity, are the mere sensations that arise at every step! Yet we surely do not deny, to him who scarcely knows that there are flowers around him, an original susceptibility of being affected by the fragrance of that very violet, the faint odour of which is now wafted to him in vain.

The great argument, however, which is urged by the deniers of any original beauty, is founded on the fluctuations of *all* our emotions of this class. When we consider the changes of every kind, with respect to the varieties of this order of our emotions,—not merely in different nations, or different ages of the world, but even in the same individual, in the few years that constitute his life,—and in many important respects, perhaps, in a few months or weeks,—can we suppose, they say, that amid these incessant changes, of which it is not difficult for us to detect the source, there should be any beauty that deserves the honourable distinction of being independent and original? In what respect, however, does this formidable argument differ from that equally formidable argument, which might be urged against the distinctions of truth and falsehood?—those distinctions, which it is impossible for the very skeptic, who professes to deny them, not to admit in his own internal conviction,—and the validity of which, the deniers of any original beauty would be far from denying, or even wishing to weaken; since the very wish to convince of the truth of their theory must be founded on this very distinction of a peculiar capacity in the mind, of a feeling of the truth of certain arguments, rather than of certain opposite arguments. If our *tastes*, however, fluctuate, do not our opinions of every sort vary in like manner? and is not the objection in the one case, then, as powerful as in the other; or, if powerless in one, must it not be equally powerless in both? I need not speak of different nations, or ages of the world, in this, more than in the other case,—of the very different systems of opinions of savage, semibarbarous, and civilized life, in all their varieties of climate and state. Here, too, it is sufficient to think of one individual,—to compare the wisdom of the mature well-educated man, with the ignorance of his boyhood, and the proud, but irregular and fluctuating acquirements of his

more advanced youth,—and if, notwithstanding all these changes, when perhaps not a single opinion ultimately remains the same, we yet cannot fail to believe, that *truth* is something more than a mere arbitrary feeling, the result of accidental circumstances, that there is, in short, an original tendency in the mind to assent to certain propositions, rather than to certain other propositions opposite to these,—we surely are not entitled to infer from the changes in the emotion of beauty, not more striking, that all in the mental susceptibility of it, is arbitrary and accidental.

In the case of those theories, which would refer all beauty in the forms and colours, or other qualities of material things, to the suggestion of mental qualities, and the succession of associate trains of images in accordance with these, there is one circumstance which may have led to the illusion, if the theories are truly to be held to be illusive; and it is a circumstance common to all those cases on which the theories are professedly founded. By the mere laws of suggestion, though no other laws of mind were concerned, and though beauty, as a primary direct emotion, were the exclusive invariable result of certain perceptions in all mankind alike, as immediate as the perceptions themselves, analogous objects would unquestionably suggest analogous objects; and, where the suggestions were rapid, and the pleasing emotion of beauty continued to co-exist with various suggestions, it might not be very obvious, when we endeavour to review the whole series of feelings, to which set of feelings the priority should be assigned; and whether the *emotion*, which perhaps led to the suggestions of the analogous objects, by the mere influence of this common delightful feeling, might not be itself rather the result of them. The pleasure which *preceded* the suggestion of an agreeable object, and still continued after that object was suggested, might thus seem to be the effect of the suggestion of the agreeable object itself. When, therefore, in our endeavour to explain the beauty of any corporeal form, we dwell on it for any length of time, or even when we dwell on it with that mere passive gaze of pleasure which its beauty excites, a variety of analogous objects may be suggested during the delightful contemplation; and, among these, since the different *mental* affections, intellectual and moral, which we feel in ourselves, or observe in others, must present to us the most interesting of all analogies, it is not wonderful that some analogous mental qualities should very readily arise in our mind, as any other analogous object is suggested in any other train. The pleasure attached to the contemplation of the mental quality, will, of course, blend with the

pleasure previously felt from the material object ; and may be conceived to be itself the chief constituent of that primary pleasure, since the subsequence is too rapid to be distinguishable on reflection. There is a pleasure also, it must be remembered, in such a case, from the mere perception of the analogy of the co-existing objects of thought,—a pleasure that constitutes the whole charm of the metaphorical language of the poet and the rhetorician,—which gives, therefore, an additional delight to the mental suggestion when the kindred image is suggested, and, consequently, leads us the more to ascribe to it the whole delight which we feel. But though, when we consider any forms and colour, simple or combined, the analogy of some mental affection may be suggested, and though, when the analogous feeling is suggested, the pleasure of the beauty may be greatly increased, this is no proof that the material objects themselves are not pleasing, independent of the suggestion, though not, perhaps, to an equal degree. The softness of moonshine may derive no slight charm, and perhaps its chief charm, from the mild graces of the mind which it suggests, or the remembrance of many a delightful evening walk with friends whom we loved. But this certainly is far from proving that this softness of moonshine would not be delightful, in any degree, if it had not excited such analogous conceptions. The sun, bursting in all his majesty, like the sovereign of the ethereal world, through the clouds, which he seems to annihilate with the very brightness of his glory, presents unquestionably many moral analogies, which add to our delight, when we gaze above or below, on that instant change, which all nature seems to feel. But would there, indeed, be no delight in the contemplation of so magnificent an object, if some moral analogy were not excited, and if the sun itself, with the instant succession of darkness and splendour, and the light diffused over every object beneath, were all of which our mind could be said to be conscious ?

Though, in this question of probabilities which we have been considering, the preponderance seems to me to be in favour of the belief of some original tendencies to the emotion of beauty, on the contemplation of certain objects,—I have already said, that it is only a small part of this order of emotions, which we can ascribe to such a source ; and these, as I conceive, of very humble value, in relation to other more important emotions of the order, which are truly the production of associations of various kinds. Though all objects might not have been originally indifferent, the objects of our livelier emotion at present, are certainly those which speak to us of moral analogies and happy re-

membrances. It will not be an uninteresting inquiry, then, in what way these associations operate, in giving birth to the emotions, or in aiding them with such powerful accessions of delight.

It is the nature of one object to suggest, by the common laws which regulate our trains of thought at all times, some other object or feeling, that has to it some one of many relations; and this again may suggest others, related to it in like manner. Each suggestion, during a long train of thought, may be the suggestion of some delightful object, and thus indirectly of the delightful emotions which such objects were of themselves capable of inducing; and though the amount of gratification additional, in each separate suggestion, may be slight, the gratification afforded by a long series of such images, all delightful in themselves, and all harmonizing with the object immediately before us, may be very considerable,—so considerable as to be sufficient not to favour merely, but absolutely to constitute that emotion, to which we give the name of beauty. Such is the view of the origin of this emotion, which has been given, with much felicity of language, and with much happy illustration of example and analysis, by my very ingenious and very eloquent friend, the author of the *Essays on the Nature and Principles of Taste*. The continued suggestion of trains of harmonizing images, Mr. Alison considers as essential to the emotion, which consists, according to him, not more in the kindred associate feelings themselves, that are recalled to the mind, than in the peculiar delight attending, what he terms, the exercise of the imagination in recalling them,—that is to say, according to the view which I have given of our mental functions, the delight which he supposes to attend the mere suggestion of image after image in associate and harmonizing trains of thought. This opinion, as to the delight of the mere exercise of imagination, seems to be founded on the belief of a sort of voluntary exertion of the mind, in such trains, when all which truly takes place in them is the operation of the common laws of suggestion, that may be pleasing or painful in their influence, precisely as the separate feelings that rise by suggestion, are themselves pleasing or painful. The exercise of imagination, in such a case, is nothing more than these separate states themselves. When we gaze on a beautiful object, we do not call up the analogous images that may arise, but they arise of themselves unwilling, and if the images were of an opposite kind, the process would itself be painful. Indeed, if the supposed exercise of imagination, were in itself as an exercise of the mind, necessarily pleasing, this exercise, Mr. Alison should have remembered, is not confined to



objects that are beautiful, but is common to these with the objects that excite emotions opposite to those of beauty, in which, therefore, it would not be very easy for him to account for its different effect. Since, according to his theory, the same species of exercise of imagination is involved in these likewise, it is very evident, that, if necessarily pleasing, it should tend, not to increase, but to lessen the disagreeable feelings, and to convert ugliness itself into a minor sort of beauty. On the fallacy of this supposed part of the process, however, it is unnecessary for us to dwell. I allude to the supposed delight of the mere exercise at present, only to show, how necessary it has been felt, in this theory, to account by a multitude of images, for an amount of delight, which seems too great for any single image in suggestion. Here, then, lies the great difficulty, which that theory has to overcome. To him, who reflects on the circumstances that have attended the emotion, in cases in which it has been most strongly felt, does it appear, on this review, that a series of images succeeding images, have passed through his mind? When we turn our eye, for example, on a beautiful living form, is there no immediate, or almost immediate, feeling of delight whatever,—but do we think of many analogies,—and, till these analogies have all been scanned, and the amount of enjoyment, which may have attended the different objects of them, been measured, is the countenance of smile, or the form of grace, only a mass of coloured matter to our eyes? There are cases, surely, in which the feeling of beauty is immediately consequent on the very perception of the beautiful form,—so immediately consequent, that it would be difficult to convince the greater number of those, who have not been accustomed to reflect on such subjects, that there is any subsequence whatever, and that the delightful emotion is not itself the very glance, which gives that happy feeling in instant sequence to the soul. I have no hesitation even in saying, that the more intense the feeling of beauty may be, the less is the tendency of the mind to pass from the delightful form, which fills the heart as it fills the eyes, to images of distant analogy,—that this transition takes place, chiefly, where the emotion is of a slight kind,—and that what is said to constitute beauty, has thus an inverse, and not a direct proportion, to that very beauty which it is said directly to constitute. There can be no question, at least, that, in the language of every poet, and of every impassioned describer of these impassioned feelings, the total suspension of all our faculties, but of that which is fixed on the contemplation of the dazzling object itself, is stated as an essential character of excess of this emotion. There is uniformly de-

scribed a sort of rapturous stupefaction, which overwhelms every other thought or feeling ;—and though this, in its full extent, may be true only in those excessive emotions, which belong rather to poetry, than to sober life,—even in sober life, there is assuredly an approach to it ; and we may safely, therefore, venture to assert, that the beauty, which scarcely allows the mind to wander for a moment from itself, is not less than the beauty, which allows its happy admirer to run over the thousand kind and gentle qualities which it expresses, or to wander, still more widely, over a thousand analogies in other objects.

If we attend, then, to the whole course of our feelings, during our admiration of the objects, which we term beautiful, we are far from discovering the process of which Mr. Alison speaks. We do not find that there is, at least, that there is necessarily, any wide combination, or rapid succession, of trains of those associate images or feelings,—which he terms *ideas of emotion* ;—and yet we have seen reason to believe, that the chief part of beauty is truly derived from that mental process, which has been termed association,—the suggestion of some feeling or feelings, not involved in the primary perception, nor necessarily flowing from it. In what manner, then, does the suggestion act ?

The associate feelings, that produce this effect, are, I conceive, of two kinds.—In the first place, any very vivid delight, that may have been accidentally connected with any particular object, may be recalled in suggestion by the same object, so as afterwards to make it seem, in combination with this associate feeling, more pleasing than it originally seemed to us ; and may, in like manner, and with similar effect, be recalled directly by an object similar or analogous to the former, which thus, even when we first gaze upon it, may appear to have a sort of original loveliness, which, but for the rapid and unperceived suggestion, it would not have possessed. *One degree* of beauty is thus acquired,—by every object similar to that which has been a source to us of any primary pleasure,—and with this faint degree of pleasing emotion, other pleasures, arising, perhaps, wholly from accidental sources, at various times, may be combined, in like manner,—rendering the state of mind, in the progressive feeling, more complex, but still, as one feeling or state of the mind, not less capable of being again suggested by the perception of the same or similar objects, than the less complex emotion, that in the first stage preceded it. With every new accidental accession of pleasure, in the innumerable events that occur from year to year, the delight itself becomes more complex ; till

at length the whole amount of complex pleasure, which the same object may afford by this rapid suggestion to the mind which contemplates it, may be as different from that which constituted the feeling of beauty in the fourth or fifth stage of the growth of the emotion, as that beauty itself, in its fourth or fifth stage, differed from the simple original perception. Still, however, the pleasing emotion, though the gradual result of many feelings of many different stages, is itself always one feeling, or momentary state of the mind, that, as one feeling, admits of being suggested as readily and rapidly in any one stage, as in any of the stages preceding; and it is this immediate state of complex emotion, however slowly and gradually formed, which I conceive to be suggested, when objects appear to us beautiful; not the number of separate delightful states, which Mr. Alison's theory supposes to be essentially necessary. We feel the instant emotion of loveliness, on the perception of a particular object, though we may have been years in forming those complex associations, which have rendered the mind capable of now feeling that instant emotion. It is in this way, that a landscape, which bears a resemblance to the scene of our early youth, or to any other scene where we have been peculiarly happy, cannot fail to be felt as more beautiful by us, than by others who have not shared with us that source of additional embellishment. The countenance of one who is dear to us, sheds a charm over similar features, that might otherwise scarcely have gained from us a momentary glance. An author, whose work we have read at an early period with delight, when it was, perhaps, one of the earliest gifts which we received, or the memorial of some tender friendship, continues for ever to exercise no inconsiderable dominion over our general taste. In these, and innumerable cases of the same kind, which must have occurred to every one in his own experience, the direct suggestion is of an amount of particular delight, associated with the particular object. This, then, is one of the modes in which I conceive the emotion of beauty to be excited, and the chief source of all the pleasure which we class under that comprehensive name. It is sufficiently easy to be understood;—it accounts for the *variety* of emotions in different individuals, when the object which one admires is such as to others seems scarcely of a nature to afford any pleasing emotion whatever; and, above all, it accounts for those more perplexing anomalies, which we sometimes find in the taste of the same individual, when he admires, in some cases, with an admiration that seems to us scarcely consistent with the refined fastidiousness which he displays on

other occasions. The delightful emotion which he feels from objects that appear to others inferior to the far nobler objects of which he disapproves, may, in such cases, be confined to him, because the associations from which the emotion has arisen, were his alone.

Such are the modes in which I conceive the past, in our emotion of beauty, to influence the present. But if all which the past presents to us be the conceptions of former delight, how happens it, that these conceptions, which often pass along our mind in reverie, with only faint and shadowy pleasure, should be heightened to so much rapture, when suggested by some real object before us? The images suggested may afford the sources of the delight; but the delight itself must be in some way modified, before it is converted into beauty. There is another part of the process, then, which we have not yet considered, to which it is necessary to attend.

What is truly most important to the emotion of beauty, is this very part of the process which theorists have yet neglected. It is not the mere suggestion of certain conceptions, general or particular, for these often form a part of our trains of thought, without any very lively feeling as their consequence. It is the fixing and embodying of these in a real object before us, which gives to the whole, I conceive, one general impression of reality. This, I have little doubt, takes place, in the manner explained by me when I treated of the peculiar influence of objects of *perception*, in giving liveliness to our trains of suggestion, and consequently greater liveliness to all the emotions which attend them. The delight of which we think, when images of the past arise, is very different from the delight which seems to be embodied in objects, and to meet our very glance, as the terror of the superstitious, when they think of a spectre in twilight, is very different from that which they feel, when their terror is incorporated in some shadowy form that gleams indistinctly on their eye. But for a process of the kind which I have stated, I do not see how the effect of beauty, *as seen*, should be so very different, as it most certainly is, from the effect produced by a long meditation on all those noble and gracious characters of virtue and intelligence,—the mere expression, that is to say, the mere suggestion of which is stated to be all which constitutes it. It is in short, as I have said, this very part of the process which seems to me the most important in the whole theory of beauty.

The increased effect of that incorporating process, which I suppose, in the case of beauty, is, in truth, nothing more than what we have found to take place in all the cases of suggestion of vivid images, by

objects of perception, rather than by our fainter and more fugitive conceptions. The reality of what is truly before us, gives reality to all the associate images that blend and harmonize with it. We think of ancient Greece,—we tread on the soil of Athens or Sparta. Our emotion, which was before faint, is now one of the liveliest of which our soul is susceptible, because it is fixed and realized in the existing and present object. The same images arise to us, but they co-exist now as they rise, with all the monuments which we behold, with the land itself, with the sound of those waves, which are dashing now as they dashed so many ages before, when their murmur was heard by the heroes of whom we think—all now lives before us, and when we behold a beautiful form, all the images suggested by it, live in like manner in it. It does not suggest to us what was once delightful, but it is itself representative of what was once delightful. The visions of other years exist again to our very eyes. We see embodied all which we feel in our mind; and the source of delight which is itself real, gives instant reality to the delight itself, and to all the harmonizing images that blend with it.

This happy effect, I have shown to be too instantaneous to be the result of a rapid review or suggestion of many particulars, in each separate case; but to depend on the combination with the objects which we term beautiful, of some instant complex feeling of past delight, or of those general notions of beauty and excellence, which themselves, indeed, originally resulted from the observation of particulars, but which afterwards are capable of being suggested as one feeling of the mind, like our other general notions of every species.

After these remarks on beauty, it is unnecessary to make any remarks on the opposite emotion,—the same observations, as to their nature, and the circumstances that produce or modify them, being equally applicable to both. As certain forms, colours, sounds, motions, works of art, and moral affections, are contemplated with delight,—the contemplation of certain other forms, colours, sounds, motions, works of art, and affections of our moral nature, is attended with a disagreeable emotion. I have also remarked, that for this opposite emotion, in its full extent, we have no adequate name;—*deformity*, and even *ugliness*,—which is a more general word,—being usually applied only to external things, and not to the intellectual or moral objects of our thought; as we apply *beauty* alike to all. There can be no doubt, however, that the same analogy, which connects our various emotions of beauty, sensitive, intellectual, and moral, exists

equally, in the emotions of this opposite class; and that, though we are not accustomed to speak of *the ugly*, and to inquire into what constitutes it, as we have been accustomed to inquire into *the beautiful*, and its supposed constituents, it is only because beauty is the more attractive, and the empire which itself possesses, is possessed, in some measure, by its very name.

#### SECTION IV.—Of Sublimity.

After the attention which we have paid to the emotions, that are usually classed together, under the general name of *beauty*,—the emotions, to the consideration of which we have next to proceed, are those which constitute our feelings of *sublimity*. On these, however, it will not be necessary to dwell at any great length; since we may apply to them many of the remarks, that were suggested by the consideration of the former species of emotion.

The feeling of sublimity, it may well be supposed, does not arise without a cause, more than our feeling of beauty; but the sublimity which we feel, like the beauty which we feel, is an affection of our mind, not a quality of any thing external. It is a feeling, however, which, like the feeling of beauty, we reflect back on the object that excited it, as if it truly formed a part of the object; and thus, instead of being merely the unknown cause of our emotion,—as when it is philosophically viewed,—the object which impresses itself on our mind, and almost on our senses, as *sublime*, is felt by us, as our own embodied emotion,—mingled, indeed, with other qualities that are material, but diffused in them with an existence that seems independent of our temporary feeling.

When Dryden said, of one of our most powerful and most delightful passions,—

“The cause of love can never be assign’d,  
’T is in no face but in the lover’s mind,”

he probably was not aware, that he was saying what was not *poetically* only, but *philosophically* true, though in a sense different from that which he meant to convey. It is not the capricious passion alone which the lover feels, as in himself, but the very beauty that is felt by him in the external object, which is as truly an emotion of his own mind as the passion to which it may have given rise. Of all those forms, on which we gaze with a delight that is never weary, because, the pleasure which we have felt, as reflected by us to the object, is to

us almost a source of the pleasure which we feel at the moment, or are about to feel,—what, I have asked, would the loveliest be, but for the eyes which gaze on it, and which give it all its charms, as they give it the very *unity* that converts it into the form which we behold? A multitude of separate and independent atoms,—we found ourselves obliged to answer,—and nothing more. In like manner, I might ask, what, but for the mind which is impressed with the sublimity, would be the precipice, the cataract, the ocean, the whole system of worlds, that seem at once to fill the immensity of space, and yet to leave on our conception an infinity, which even worlds without number could not fill? To these, too, sublime as they are felt by us to be, it is our mind alone, which gives at once all the unity and sublimity, which they seem to us to possess, as of their own nature. They are, in truth, only a number of atoms, that would be precisely the same in themselves, whether existing near to each other, or at distances the most remote. But it is impossible for us to regard them merely as a number of atoms; because they affect us with one complex emotion, which we diffuse over them all. When precipice hangs over precipice, and we shrink back on our perilous height, as we strive to look down from the cliff, on the abyss beneath,—in which we rather hear the torrent, than see it, with our shuddering and dazzled eye,—we have one vivid, though complicated feeling, which fills our whole soul; and all the objects existing separately before us, are one vast and terrifying image of all that is within us. In the hurricane that lays waste, and almost annihilates whatever it meets, there is to our conception something more than the mere particles of air that form each successive blast. We animate it with our own feelings. It is not a cause of terror only,—it is terror itself. It seems to bear about with it that *awful sublimity*, of which we are conscious,—an emotion, that, as it animates our corporeal frame with one expansive feeling, seems to give a sort of *dreadful unity* to all the thunders of the tempest, or rather to form one mighty being of all the minute elements, that when they rage, impelling and impelled, in the tumultuous atmosphere, are merely congregated, by accidental vicinity, as they exist equally together in the gentlest breeze, or in the stillness of the summer sky.

That sublimity should be reflected to the object from the mind, like beauty, is not wonderful; since, in truth, what we term *beauty* and *sublimity*, are not opposite, but, in the greater number of cases, are merely different parts of a series of emotions. I have already, in treating of beauty, pointed out the error to which the common language

of philosophers has a tendency,—the error of supposing, that beauty is one emotion, merely because we have invented that generic or specific name, which comprehends at once many agreeable emotions; that have some resemblance, indeed, as being agreeable, and diffused, as it were, or concentrated in their objects, and are therefore classed together, but still are far from being the same. *The beautiful*, concerning which philosophers have been at so much pains in their inquiries, is, as we have seen, in the mode in which they conceive it to exist, a sort of *real essence*,—an universal *a parte rei*, which has retained its hold of the belief, when other universals of this kind, not less real, had been suffered to retain a place, only in the insignificant vocabulary of scholastic logic.

Our emotions of beauty, I have said, are various; and, as they gradually rise, from object to object, a sort of regular progression may be traced, from the faintest beauty, to the vastest sublimity. These extremes may be considered as united, by a class of intermediate feelings, for which *grandeur* might, perhaps, be a suitable term, that have more of beauty, or more of sublimity, according to their place in the scale of emotion. I have retained, however, the common twofold division of beauty and sublimity, not as thinking that there may not be intermediate feelings, which scarcely admit of being very suitably classed under either of these names, but because the same general reasoning must be applicable to all these states of mind, whatever names, or number of names, may be given to the varieties that fill up the intervening space. Indeed, if all the various emotions, to which, in their objects, we attach the single name of *beautiful*, were attentively considered, we might find reason to form, of this single order, many subdivisions, with their appropriate terms; but this precision of minute nomenclature, in such a case, is of less importance, if we know sufficiently the general fact involved in it,—that there is not one beauty, or one sublimity, but various feelings, to which, in their objects, we give the name of beauty, and various feelings, to which, in their objects, we give the name of sublimity; and that there may be intermediate feelings, which differ from these, as these respectively differ from each other. That which happens, in innumerable other cases, has happened in this case; we have a series of many feelings; we have invented the names, *sublimity* and *beauty*, which we have attached to certain parts of this series; and because we have invented the names, we think that the emotions which they designate, are more opposed to each other, than they seemed to us before. One feeling of beauty differs from another



feeling of beauty ; but they are both comprehended in the same term and we forget the difference. One feeling of sublimity, differs, in like manner, from another feeling of sublimity ; but they also are both comprehended in one term, and their difference too is forgotten. It is not so, when we compare one emotion of beauty with another emotion of sublimity ; the feelings are then not merely different, but they are expressed by a different term ; and their opposition is thus doubly forced upon us. If we had not invented any terms whatever, we should have seen, as it were, a series of emotions, all shadowing into each other, with differences of tint, more or less strong, and rapidly distinguishable. The invention of the terms, however, is like the intersection of the series, at certain places, with a few well-marked lines. The shadowing may still, in itself, be equally gradual ; but we think of the sections only, and perceive a peculiar resemblance in the parts comprehended in each, as we think that we perceive a peculiar diversity at each bounding line.

To be convinced how readily the feelings, contrasted as they may seem at last, have flowed into each other, let us take some example. Let us imagine that we see before us, a stream gently gliding through fields, rich with all the luxuriance of summer, overshadowed at times by the foliage that hangs over it, from bank to bank, and then suddenly sparkling in the open sunshine, as if with a still brighter current than before. Let us trace it, till it widens to a *majestic river*, of which the waters are the boundary of two flourishing empires, conveying abundance equally to each, while city succeeds city, on its populous shores, almost with the same rapidity as grove formerly succeeded grove. Let us next behold it losing itself in the immensity of the ocean, which seems to be only an expansion of itself, when there is not an object to be seen but its own wild amplitude, between the banks which it leaves, and the sun that is setting, as if in another world, in the remote horizon ;—in all this course, from the brook, which we leap over, if it meet us in our way, to that boundless waste of waters, in which the power of man, that leaves some vestige of his existence in every thing else, is not able to leave one lasting impression,—which, after his fleets have passed along in all their pride, is, the very moment after, as if they had never been, and which bears or dashes those navies that are contending for the mastery of kingdoms, only as it bears or dashes the foam upon its waves,—if we were to trace and contemplate this whole continued progress, we should have a series of emotions, which might, at each moment, be similar to the

preceding emotion, but which would become, at last, so different from our earliest feelings, that we should scarcely think of them as feelings of one class. The emotions which rose, when we regarded the narrow stream, would be those which we class as emotions of *beauty*. The emotions which rose, when we considered that infinity of waters, in which it was ultimately lost, would be of the kind which we denominate *sublimity*; and the grandeur of the river, while it was still distinguishable from the ocean, to which it was proceeding, might be viewed with feelings, to which some other name or names, might, on the same principle of distinction, be given. This progressive series, we should see very distinctly, as progressive, if we had not invented the two general terms; but the invention of the terms, certainly, does not alter the nature of these feelings, which the terms are employed merely to signify.

Innumerable other examples,—from increasing magnitude of dimensions, or increasing intensity of quality,—might be selected, in illustration of that species of sublimity which we feel in the contemplation of external things, as *progressively* rising from emotions that would be termed emotions of beauty, if they were considered alone. It is unnecessary, however, to repeat, with other examples, what is sufficiently evident, without any other illustration, from the case already instanced.

The same progressive series of feelings, which may thus be traced as we contemplate works of nature, is not less evident in the contemplation of works of human art, whether that art have been employed in material things, or be purely intellectual. From the cottage to the cathedral—from the simplest ballad air, to the harmony of a choral anthem—from a pastoral to an epic poem, or a tragedy—from a landscape, or a sculptured Cupid, to a Cartoon, or the Laocoon—from a simple experiment in chemistry, to the elucidation of the whole system of chemical affinities, which regulate all the changes on the surface of our globe—from a simple theorem, to the Principia of Newton:—In all those cases in which I have merely stated what is beautiful and what is sublime, and left a wide space between, it is easy for the imagination to fill up the interval; and we cannot fill up this interval without perceiving, that, merely by adding what seemed degree after degree, we arrive at last at emotions which have little apparent resemblance to the emotions with which the scale began. It is, as in the thermometric scale; by adding one portion of caloric after another, we rise at last, after no very long progress, from the cold of freezing, to the heat at which water boils; though our feelings, at these two

points, are as different as if they had arisen from causes that had no resemblance;—certainly as different as our emotions of sublimity and beauty.

In the moral scene, the progression is equally evident. By adding virtue to virtue, or circumstance to circumstance in the exercise of any virtue, we rise from what is merely beautiful to what is sublime. Let us suppose, for example, that in the famine of an army, a soldier divides his scanty allowance with one of his comrades whose health is sinking under the privation. We feel, in the contemplation of this action, a pleasure, which is that of moral beauty. In proportion as we imagine the famine of longer duration, or the prospect of relief less probable, the action becomes more and more morally grand or heroic. Let us next imagine, that the comrade, to whose relief the soldier makes his generous sacrifice, is one whose enmity he has formerly experienced on some interesting occasion; and the action is not *heroic* merely, it is *sublime*. There is not a virtue, even of the most tranquil or gentle sort, which we may not, in like manner, render sublime, by varying the circumstances in which it is exercised; and by varying these gradually we pass through a series of emotions, any two of which may be regarded as not very dissimilar; though the extremes, when considered without the parts of the series which connect them, may scarcely have even the slightest similarity.

When I speak of this progression of our feelings, by which emotion after emotion may rise, from the faintest of those which we refer to beauty, to the most overwhelming of those which we term sublime, I am far from intimating that such a progress is in all cases necessary to the emotion; I allude to it merely for the purpose of showing, that sublimity is not, by its nature, of a class of feelings essentially different from beauty; and that we may, therefore, very readily conceive, that the laws which we have found applicable to beauty, may be applicable to it also.

So far is it, indeed, from being indispensable to sublimity, that beauty should be the characteristic of the same circumstance, in a less degree, that in many instances what is absolutely the reverse of beautiful, becomes sublime, by the exclusion of every thing which could excite of itself that delightful but gentle emotion. A slight degree of barren dreariness in any country through which we travel, produces only feelings that are disagreeable; a wide extent of desolation, when the eye can see no verdure as far as it can reach, but only rocks that rise at irregular intervals, through the sandy waste, has a sort of savage

sublimity, which we almost delight to contemplate. In the moral world, the audacity of guilt cannot seem *beautiful* to us in any of its degrees; but it may excite in us, when it is of more than ordinary atrocity, that species of emotion which we are now considering. Who is there who can love Medea as she is represented to us in the ancient story? But to whom is she not sublime? It is not in Marius, that we would look for a model of moral beauty; but what form is there, which the painter would feel more internal sublimity in designing, than that bloodthirsty chief, sitting amid the ruins of Carthage, when as a Roman poet, by a bold rhetorical figure, says of the memorable scene, and the memorable outcast whom it sheltered, each was to the other a consolation, and, equally afflicted and overwhelmed together, they forgave the gods. An old French opera, of which D'Alembert speaks, on the horrible story of Atreus and Thyestes, that story on which, as on other horrible stories of the kind, the ancients were so strangely fond of dwelling, in preference, and almost to the exclusion of more interesting pathos, concludes, after the banquet, with the vengeance of the gods on the contriver of the dreadful feast; and amidst the bolts that are falling around him on every side, Atreus cries out, as if exulting, "Thunder, ye *powerless* gods, I am avenged." To lessen that triumphant revenge, which is so sublime in this case, would be not to produce an emotion of beauty, but to produce that disgust and contempt, which we feel for petty malice. I need not allude to the multitude of other cases, to which the same remark would be equally applicable.

Whether, then, the emotions be, or be not, of a kind which may be gradual, by the omission of some circumstance, or the diminution of the vivid feeling itself, lessened down to that emotion, which we ascribe to mere beauty, it is not the less sublime, if it truly involves that species of vivid feeling, which we distinguish, with sufficient readiness, from the gentle delight of beauty, as we distinguish the sensation of a burn, from that of gentle warmth, without being able to state, in words, in what circumstance, or circumstances, the difference of the feelings consists. It is the vain attempt to define what cannot be defined, that has led to all the errors and supposed mysteries in the theory of sublimity, as it has led to similar errors in the theory of beauty. Sublimity is not one emotion, but various emotions, that have a certain resemblance,—the sublime in itself is nothing; or at least, it is only a mere name, indicative of our feeling of the resemblance of certain affections of our mind, excited by objects, material or mental, that agree, perhaps, in

no other circumstance, but in that analogous undefinable emotion which they excite. Whatever is vast, in the material world—whatever is supremely comprehensive in intellect—whatever in morals implies virtuous affections or passions far beyond the ordinary level of humanity, or even guilt, that is ennobled, in some measure, by the fearlessness of its daring, or the magnitude of the ends, to which it has had the boldness to aspire—these and various other objects, in mind and matter, produce certain vivid feelings, which are so similar as to be classed together; and, if we speak of sublimity, merely in reference to the various objects which excite these analogous feelings, so as to make the enumeration of the objects a sort of definition of the species of emotion itself, there can be no risk of mistake, more than in saying, that sweetness is a word expressive of those sensations which sugar, honey, and various other substitutes that might be named, excite. But, if we attempt to define sweetness itself as a sensation, or sublimity itself as an emotion, we either state what is absolutely nugatory, or what is still more probably false in its general extent, however partially true; because our attention, in our definition, will be given to some particular emotions of the class, not to any thing common to the class, since there is truly no common circumstance, which words can adequately express. Hence it happens, that by this singling out of particular objects, we have many theories of sublimity, as we have of beauty; all of them founded on the supposition of an universal sublimity *a parte rei*, as the theories of beauty were founded on an universal beauty *a parte rei*. Sublimity, says one writer, is the terrible—according to another writer, it is magnitude or amplitude, which is essential to the emotion—according to another, it is mighty force or power—according to another, it is the mere suggestion of images of feelings, directly connected with that elevation in place which has given *sublimity* its name—according to another, it arises from a wider range of associations, all, however, centering in some prior affections of the *mind*, as their direct source. It is very true, that terror, vastness of size, extraordinary force, high elevation, and various associate images, do produce feelings of sublimity; but it is not equally true, that any *one* of these feelings is itself all the other feelings. Great elevation, for example, may excite in me the emotion to which it has given the distinctive name, and it is even possible, that many great virtues may, by a sort of poetic analogy, suggest the notion of local elevation, as snow suggests the notion of spotless innocence, or the shadow that follows any brilliant object, the notion of envy pursuing merit. But even

though, in thinking of heroic virtue, the analogy of local elevation were excited,—which it surely is only in very rare cases,—this would be no reason for believing, that the heroic virtue itself is incapable of exciting emotion, till it have previously suggested height, and the feelings associated with height. It is the same with magnitude or power; they are causes of sublime feelings, not causes of the sublime,—which has no real existence,—nor of those other sublime feelings, which have no direct relation to magnitude or power. Power itself, for example, is not magnitude; nor magnitude power. The contemplation of eternity or infinity of space, is instantly, and of itself, as a mere object of thought, productive of this emotion, without any regard to my power of conceiving infinity, which may, indeed be a subsequent cause of astonishment, but which certainly does not precede the emotion as its cause. In like manner, any great energy of mind, either in acting or bearing, though it may suggest, by analogy, *magnitude*, as it may suggest many other analogies, does not depend, for the emotion which it excites, on the previous suggestion of the analogous amplitude of size. The two primary errors, in all these various theories, which may be considered as confutations of each other, consist in supposing, first, that sublimity is one,—*the sublime*, to use the language of theory,—which, therefore, as suggested by one object, may be precisely the same with the emotion suggested by other objects; and secondly, the belief, that because certain objects have an analogy, so as to be capable, by the mere laws of association, of suggesting each other, they, therefore, do uniformly suggest each other, and excite emotion only in this way,—that because any generous sacrifice, for instance, *may* suggest the notion of magnitude or elevation in place—which, if it suggest them at all, it suggests only rarely,—it, therefore, *must* at all times suggest them,—as if it were absolutely impossible for us to see an object, without thinking of any analogous object,—to look on snow, without thinking of innocence, or on a shadow, without thinking of envy.

#### SECTION V.—*Of the Emotion caused by the Ludicrous.*

The species of emotion which next demands our attention, is that, which, in the common realism of the language of philosophers, is said to be occasioned by the *ludicrous*, an emotion of light mirth, which may be considered as opposite to that of sublimity, though not opposite in the strict sense, in which beauty and ugliness are opposed. There

are, indeed, some feelings of this kind, which may be said to arise from qualities that are truly the reverse of those on which sublimity depends, and in which, accordingly, the opposition is as complete as that of ugliness and beauty. In the composition of works of fancy, for example, a mere excess or diminution of the very circumstances which render a thought sublime, produces either bombast or inanity, and a consequent emotion of ridicule or gay contempt; as in the human countenance, an increase or diminution of any beautiful feature, may convert into deformity what was beauty before, and produce a corresponding change in our emotions. In this peculiar species of disproportion, when the sublime is intended, but when the images, from the inability of the author to produce and distinguish sublimity, are either overstrained or mean, consists what has been termed *bathos*, as rhetorically opposed to those peculiar emotions, to which, indeed, the very etymology of the term marks the opposition that has been felt.

Before entering on the minuter inquiry concerning the nature of this emotion, I may remark, that every theory which would make our feelings of this kind to depend on some modification of mere pride in a comparison of ourselves and others, to our advantage, and to the disparagement, therefore, of the person supposed to be compared with us, is founded on a false and very limited view of the phenomena; since the feeling is as strong, where there is the highest admiration of the wit of the speaker, and consequently, where any comparison, like that which is supposed to be essential to the production of the emotion, would be to our disadvantage. It is in vain, for example, that Hobbes defines laughter to be "a sudden glory, arising from a sudden conception of some eminency in ourselves, by comparison with the infirmity of others, or with our own formerly,"—for we laugh as readily at some brilliant conception of wit, where there are no infirmities of others displayed, as where they are displayed in any awkward blunder. We often laugh, too, at this very definition, indeed, asserts, in thinking of our own mistakes of this sort, when we surely cannot feel any great glory, nor any eminence in ourselves, more than if we had never been guilty of the mistake; the effect of our discovery of our mistake being merely to raise us to that level of ordinary excellence at which we imagined ourselves before;—not to raise us in the slightest degree above it. If the theory of Hobbes, or any theory, which converts our mere feeling of ludicrousness into a proud comparison of ourselves and others, were just, it would then follow, as has been objected to this theory, that a man who was very self-conceited and supercilious, would

be peculiarly prone to mirth, when, on the contrary, it happens, that children, and, if persons in advanced life, those whose temper is most social, are the most readily excited to laughter ; while the proud, to whom their superiority most readily recurs, are usually very little disposed to merriment. "Seldom they smile," may be said of them, as was said of Cassius ; and when they do smile, their smile, like his, so admirably described by Shakspeare, has little in it of the full *glorifying* and *eminency* of laughter, but is

" of such a sort,

As if they mock'd themselves, and scorn'd their spirit,  
That could be mov'd to smile at any thing." \*

The mere *stupidity* of any one, when there is no vanity of pretension to contrast with it, does not make us laugh ; yet if laughter arose from the mere triumph of personal superiority, there would surely, in this case, be equal reason for selfish exultation ; and a company of blockheads should be the gayest of all society. In any brilliant piece of wit, it is to the images or thought suggested, in ready eloquence, that we look, without regard to him who is its author ; unless, indeed, in those cases in which the very character or situation of the speaker may of itself produce a sort of ludicrousness, by its incongruity with the gravity or levity of what is said. There is scarcely any thing which is more ludicrous than a happy parody ; and though the author of the parody may be allowed to feel some triumph over the original author, —if even his playful metamorphose of what is dignified and excellent can be termed a triumph, which is rather an amusement than a victory ;—this triumph certainly cannot be felt by the mere hearers, since their pleasure is always greater in proportion, not to the infirmity of which Hobbes speaks, but to the excellence of the original, without great merit in which, or supposed great merit, the parody itself could not be felt as having any claim to our laughter or our praise. A parody on any dull verses would, indeed, be still duller than the dullness which it ridicules.

It is not any *proud comparison*, therefore, which constitutes what is termed *the ludicrous* ; but, even in the proudest of such comparisons, some other circumstance or circumstances. It is the combination of general incongruity with partial and unexpected congruity of the mere images themselves, which may, indeed, in some cases, lead to this triumph as an auxiliary pleasure, but which has an immediate and

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\* Julius Cæsar.—Act I. Scene 2.



independent pleasure of its own—a pleasure arising from the discovery of unsuspected resemblance in objects formerly conceived to be known to us, or unsuspected difference in objects formerly regarded as highly similar.

Nothing is felt as truly ludicrous in which there is not an unexpected congruity developed in images that were before supposed to be opposite in kind, or some equally unexpected incongruity in images supposed to be congruous; and the sudden perception of these discrepancies and agreements may be said to be that which constitutes the ludicrousness; the gay emotions being immediately subsequent to the mere perception of the unexpected relation.

The congruities and incongruities, which give rise to this emotion, may be either in mere language, or in the thoughts and images which language expresses, or, in many cases, in the very objects of our direct perception.

On the first of these,—the resemblance of mere *sounds*, in puns, and other trifling verbal analogies of the same class, it is unnecessary for me to dwell at present, as they have been before under our review. How truly the ludicrousness of the pun consists in the unexpected similarity of discrepant images, is shown by the greater or less pleasure which it affords, in proportion as the images themselves are more or less discrepant,—being greatest, therefore, when there is a complete opposition, with the exception of that single tie of similar sound, which is found unexpectedly to connect them. When the images themselves are congruous, so as to seem capable of being suggested by their own congruities, the pun is scarcely felt, or rather there is nothing felt to which the name of pun can be given.

But though the unsuspected connection of objects, by their resemblances of mere sound, as in puns, and all the small varieties of verbal and literal wit, may be uniformly ludicrous, this is far from being the case with the other species of unsuspected resemblance, in relations of thought to thought, or of existing things. It is necessary, therefore, to form some limitation of the general proposition as to the ludicrousness of relations which we perceive suddenly and unexpectedly, the only circumstance which as yet we have supposed to be necessary to the rise of the emotion.

In the first place, an exception must be made in the case of scientific truths. When it is discovered, in chemistry, or in any other physical science, that there truly have been relations of objects or events, which were not suspected by us before, there is no feeling of ludicrousness,

though the substances found to have some common property should be opposite in every other respect. What could be more unexpected, or more incongruous with our previous conceptions of the specific gravity of metals, than the discovery, that the lightest of all substances, which are not in the state of an aerial fluid, is a *metal*, the base of another substance with which we had been long acquainted? Yet, though we were astonished at such a discovery, we felt no tendency whatever to laugh. The relation, in short, did not seem to us to involve any thing ludicrous.

Why then do we not laugh, in such a case, at the discovery of the resemblance of objects or qualities, which were before regarded by us as not less incongruous than any of the unsuspected relations which are exhibited to us in the quaintest conundrum, that excites our laughter, almost in the very instant in which the strange relation is pointed out? The principal reason of this difference, I conceive, is the importance of the physical relation. The interest attached by us to the discovery of truth, occupies the mind too seriously, to allow that light play of thought which is essential to the rise of the gay emotion. In this respect, there is a very striking analogy to a species of animal action, which resembles our emotions of this kind also, in some other striking circumstances, particularly in the tendency to laughter, which is an equal and very curious result of both. If the palm of the hand be gently tickled, when the mind is vacant, the influence of the mechanical operation in this way is very powerful; but, if the faculties be exerted on any interesting subject, the same action on the palm of the hand may take place without any consequent laughter, and even, perhaps, without any consciousness of the process which has been taking place. A new phenomenon, or a new discovered relation, in former phenomena, engages the mind too closely to allow any feeling of ludicrousness, and consequent laughter to arise,—in the same way as those very circumstances would probably be sufficient to prevent the laughter of tickling, if the mechanical cause were applied at the very moment at which we learn the important discovery, and applied precisely in the same manner as when the strange feeling and the laughter were before the result.

There is another circumstance, that, in the case of a law of nature, however strange and apparently incongruous with our former conceptions its phenomena may be, must have considerable effect in occupying the mind more fully with the discovery;—that it is impossible for the mind to rest in the simple discovery, without rapidly passing in review the various circumstances that seem to us likely to be connected with it

in the analogous phenomena—a state of mind which is of itself most unfavourable to the mirthful emotion. There are, unquestionably, states of mind, during the prevalence of affliction, or any strong passion, in which there is no point in the jest, as there is no pleasure in the very aspect of joy. To the friend returning from the funeral of his friend, we, of course, do not think of uttering any of those common expressions of merriment, in which, at other times, we might occasionally indulge; the natural respect which we feel for sorrow, being sufficient to check the gaiety, or, at least, the appearance of gaiety. But, even though, in violation of that respect which the sorrowful claim, the happiest effusions of wit were to be poured out, on such an occasion, there would be no answering mirth, in that heart, which, at other times, would have felt and returned the gaiety. What grief thus manifestly does, other strong interests, that absorb, in like manner, the general feelings of the mind, may well be supposed to do; and we may, therefore, listen to facts, the most seemingly incongruous with our prior knowledge, when our curiosity is awake to their importance, as objects of science, without the slightest disposition to those light emotions, which almost every other incongruity, or fancied incongruity, would have produced.

It may accordingly be remarked, that to those, who have not sufficient elementary knowledge of science, to feel any interest in physical truths, as one connected system, and no habitual desire of exploring the various relations of new phenomena, many of the facts in nature, which have an appearance of incongruity, as first stated, do truly seem ludicrous. If the vulgar were to be told, that they do not see directly the magnitude, or place, or distance of bodies, with their eyes alone, but, in some measure, by the indirect influence of other senses, or which light has no effect whatever,—that the feelings of cold and heat proceed from the same cause,—and that there is a great deal of heat in the coldest ice, they would not merely *disbelieve* what we might say, but they would laugh at what we tell them, as if it were *absolutely ridiculous*. The gravest truths of science would be to them, what the pleasantries of wit are to us.

The relations, which are ludicrous, and which, as ludicrous, in every instance involve some unsuspected resemblance of objects or qualities before regarded as incongruous, or some equally unsuspected diversity, when the resemblance was before supposed to be complete, admit, perhaps, of being referred to three classes—in the first place, to the class of those, in which objects are brought together, that are noble

and mean, or the forms of language, commonly employed in treating subjects high and low, are transferred from one to the other. Such a transfer, gives rise, in the one case, to the *burlesque*, in which objects, noble in themselves, are made ridiculous by the meanness of phrases and figures ; in the other case, to the *mock-heroic*, in which, by a contrary process, the mean is rendered ridiculous by the magnificent trappings of rhetoric with which it is invested.

In these instances of artificial combination of the very great, and the very little, there can be no question as to the ludicrousness of the emotion which such piebald dignity excites ; and there are circumstances which occur in nature, exactly of the same kind, and productive, therefore, of the same emotion ; the incongruities being not in mere thought and image, but in objects directly perceived. When any well dressed person, walking along the street, falls into the mud of some splashy gutter, the situation and the dirt, when combined with the character and appearance of the unfortunate stumbler, form a sort of *natural burlesque*, or *mock-heroic*, in which there is a mixture of the noble and the mean, as much as in any of the works of art, to which those names are given. He who amuses us by his fall, is, in truth, for the moment, an unintentional buffoon, performing for us, unwillingly, what the buffoon, with his stately strut, and his paper crown, and the other trappings of mock royalty, strives to imitate, with less effect, because there is wanting, in him, that additional contrast of the lofty state of mind, with the ridiculous situation, which forms so important a part of the laughable whole in the accidental fall. It is this contrast of the state of mind, with that which we feel that it would be, if the circumstances were known to him, that forms the principal ludicrousness of the situation of any one, who has the misfortune of being in a crowded company, with his coat accidentally torn, or with any other imperfection of dress, that attracts all eyes, perhaps, but his own. In the rude pastimes of the village, in like manner, it is because the swain is

“Mistrustless of his smutted face,  
That secret laughter titters round the place.”

A second class of relations, which are ludicrous, are those which derive their ludicrousness, not from the objects themselves, but from the mind of the hearer or reader, which has been previously led to expect something very different from what is presented to it. To take a very

trite example of this sort : If the question be asked, What wine do you like best ? One person, perhaps, answering, Champagne, another, Burgundy, and a third says, the wine which I am not to pay for. We laugh, if we laugh at all, chiefly because we expected a very different answer ; and the incongruity which is felt, has relation, therefore, to our own state of mind, more than to the question itself. It is this previous anticipation of an answer, with which the answer received by us is partially incongruous, that either forms the principal delight of many of the *bon mots* of conversation, or at least aids their effect most powerfully ; and, by the contrast which it produces, it adds, in a most mortifying manner, to the painful keenness of an unexpected sarcasm. Thus, to take an instance from a story which Dr. Arbuthnot tells us, " Sir William Temple, and the famous Lord Brumpker, being neighbours in the country, had frequently very sharp contentions ; like other great men, one could not bear an equal, and the other would not admit of a superior. My Lord was a great admirer of curiosities, and had a very good collection, which Sir William used to undervalue upon all occasions, disparaging every thing of his neighbour's and giving something of his own the preference. This by no means pleased his Lordship, who took all opportunities of being revenged. One day, as they were discoursing together of their several rarities, my Lord very seriously and gravely replied to him, ' Sir William, say no more of the matter, you must at length yield to me, I having lately got something which it is impossible for you to obtain ; for, sir,' said his Lordship smiling, ' my Welch steward has sent me a flock of *geese*, and those what you can never have, since all *your geese* are *swans*.' " \* In this case, there can be no doubt, that the keenness of the sarcasm, would be far more severely felt, in consequence of the previous anticipation of an answer of a very different kind.

The feeling of ludicrousness is the same, when our previous anticipation is disappointed by agreement, where we expected difference, as when it is disappointed by difference, where we expected agreement. Such is the case in the game of Cross Purposes, where, in a series of questions and answers, the answers are paired with questions to which they were not given. In what are termed the cross readings of newspapers, where, without paying regard to the separation into columns, we read what is in the same line of the page, through the successive columns, as if continuous, there is little agreement of sense

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\* *Miscellanies*, 2d Edit. Vol I. p. 113.

to be expected, and we smile accordingly at the strange congruities which such readings may sometimes discover.

A third set of relations of this kind derive their ludicrousness from our consideration of the mind of the speaker, or writer, or performer of the action. When our mirth is excited at any awkward effort, for example, we laugh, because we are aware of that which the effort was intended to perform, and are struck with the contrast of the performance itself. We laugh, in short, at the awkward failure, not at the motion or attitude itself, considered simply, without relation to some higher end, as a mere motion or attitude; and we laugh at the failure, because we compare as I have said, the awkward result with the grace which was intended, or which, at least, we imagine to have been intended.

It is, as might be supposed, on a similar principle, that our mirth is excited by every appearance of mental awkwardness. We laugh, for example, when we discover in a work any very visible marks of constraint and difficulty on the part of an author, as in far-fetched thoughts, or stiff and quaint phraseology,—and we laugh, not merely on account of the incongruity of the thoughts or phrases themselves, which are thus strangely brought into union, though this, perhaps, may form the chief element of the ludicrousness, but in some degree also, at the contrast of the labour which we discover, with the ease which the writer is supposed by us to assume and affect. That composition of every sort involves difficulty on the part of the composer, we know well; but we still require that the difficulty should be kept from our sight. We must not see him biting his nails, and torturing himself to give us satisfaction. His great aim accordingly is, to present to us what is excellent, but to present it, so free from any marks of the toil which it has cost, as to seem almost to have risen in the mind by the unrestrained course of spontaneous suggestion. Any appearance of constraint, therefore, presents to us a sort of incongruity, almost as striking as when the noble and the mean are blended together. Even when we think, in reading any of the extravagant conceits that abound so much in the works of our older writers, that we are smiling merely at the images which are brought together, and which nature seems to have intended never to meet, we are, in truth, smiling in part at the very feelings of the writer, when he was so laboriously and painfully absurd. If the feelings that succeed each other, in the mind even of the sublimest poet, in the weary hour of composition, could, by any process, be made distinctly visible to us, there is no small reason to apprehend,

that, with all our reverence for his noble art, and for his own individual excellence in that art, our emotions would be of the ludicrous kind, or, at least, that some portion of the ludicrous would mingle with our admiration. There can be no question, that he would seem to have performed more labour, if we could be thus conscious of his feelings, before his labour was half accomplished, than if we were only to have exhibited to us the beautiful results of the whole long continued exercise of his thought. This labour, which a skilful writer knows so well how to conceal from us, a writer, who is fond of astonishing us with extravagant conceits, forces constantly upon our view; and there is hence scarcely any image, which he presents to us, so ludicrous as that picture which he indirectly gives us of himself.

Another set of examples, in which the consideration of the mind of the speaker forms an essential part of the ludicrousness, are those which are commonly termed *bulls* or *blunders*; in which there is no ludicrousness, unless we are able to distinguish what the speaker meant, and thus to discover some strange agreement of his real meaning, with that opposite or contradictory meaning which the words seem to convey. A *bull* must, therefore, be genuine, or for the moment considered to be genuine, before it can divert with its incongruity. As mere nonsense, it would be as little amusing as any other nonsense. We must have before us, in conception at least, the speaker himself, and contrast the well-meaning seriousness of his affirmation with the verbal absurdity which he utters, of which we are at the same time able to discover the unsuspected tie.

The emotion we have been considering, is not a simple feeling, but the analysis of it does not seem very difficult. The necessary *unexpectedness* of the congruity or incongruity that is remarked, seems of itself to point out one element, in the astonishment which may naturally be supposed to arise in such a case; and the other element, which nature has made as quick to rise on the perception of the ludicrous object, as astonishment itself, is a vivid feeling of delight, one of the forms of that joy or gladness which I comprehended in my enumeration of the few primary constituents of our emotions. Astonishment, combined with this particular delight, is the mirthful emotion that has been the subject of our inquiry; and Akenside, therefore, in giving it the name of "gay surprise,"\* seems to have expressed, with the analytic

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\* The expression in the original seems to be "gay contempt." See "Pleasures of Imagination," B. III. v. 260—and second form of the poem, B. II. v. 524.

accuracy of a philosopher, the complex feelings which he was poetically describing.

The advantages which we derive from our susceptibility of this species of emotion, are, in their immediate influence on the cheerfulness, and therefore on the general happiness of society, sufficiently obvious. How many hours would pass wearily along but for these pleasantries of wit, or of easier and less pretending gaiety, which enliven what would have been dull, and throw many bright colours on what would have been gloomy. We are not to estimate these accessions of pleasure lightly, because they relate to objects that may seem trifling, when considered together with those more serious concerns, by which our ambition is occupied, and in relation to which, in the success or failure of our various projects, we look back on the past months or years of our life, as fortunate or unfortunate. If these serious concerns alone were to be regarded, we might often have been very fortunate and very unhappy, as in other circumstances we might often have had much happiness in the hours and days of years, which terminated at last in the disappointment of some favourite scheme. It is good to travel with pure and balmy airs and cheerful sunshine, though we should not find, at the end of our journey, the friend whom we wished to see; and the gaieties of social converse, though they are not, in our journey of life, what we travel to obtain, are, during the continuance of our journey, at once a freshness which we breathe, and a light that gives every object to sparkle to our eye, with a radiance that is not its own.

Such are the immediate and obvious influences of this emotion. But it is not of slight value in influences that are less direct; though capable of being sometimes abused, and far from being always so exactly coincident with moral propriety, as to furnish a criterion of rectitude, it must be allowed to be, in its ordinary circumstances, favourable to virtue, presenting often a check to improprieties, on which, but for such a restraint, the heedless would rush without scruple—a check, too, which is, by its very nature, peculiarly suited to those who despise the more serious restraints of moral principle, and the opinion of the virtuous. The world's dread laugh, which even the firm philosopher is said to be scarcely able to scorn, cannot be scorned by those to whom the approbation of the world is, what conscience is to the wise and virtuous; and though that laugh is certainly not so unerring as the voice of moral judgment within the breast, it is still, in



far the greater number of cases, in accordance with it ; and when it differs, differs far more frequently in the degree of its censure or its praise, than in actual censure of what is praiseworthy, or praise of what is wholly censurable.

END OF VOL. I.



space 10

When the mind  
be always in a state of agitation  
and the mind is in a state of agitation

3  
15  
16







